Kispiox Forest District

Tourism Opportunity Study

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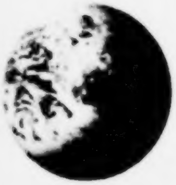

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The tourism industry is one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world economy. In BC, tourism is already the province's second largest industry – generating $9.2 billion in revenues with some 16,700 tourism-related businesses employing over 113,000 BC workers. British Columbia's tourism industry is expected to grow steadily over the next three years with the influence of the maturing baby boomer generation. With an increase in disposable income and leisure time, travel has become a priority for this segment of the population. There are also changes in the type of travel experiences being sought, with an increasing demand for specialty tours that cater to interests such as outdoor adventure, culture, education and wellness. Indeed, recent research would indicate that 'ecotourism' and 'adventure travel' is now the fastest growing segment of the tourism industry.

Many visitors to BC are already attracted to the province for its diverse natural beauty and outdoor recreational opportunities. Therefore, the province is perfectly poised to capitalize on the new opportunities for economic and employment growth possible from expansion in the ecotourism area. Rural BC communities, in particular, have a tremendous opportunity to expand and diversify their economic and employment base through land-based tourism development. Importantly, these opportunities for expansion in tourism are arriving at the same time that many rural BC communities are struggling with significant structural change in their traditional resource economies.

Recognizing both the challenges and opportunities presented by ecotourism expansion, the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism & Culture (MSBTC) developed a provincial Ecotourism Strategy as part of the provincial government's Green Economy Initiative.[1] Meredith & Associates of Smithers were commissioned by MSBTC to undertake this *Tourism Opportunity Study* to identify opportunities for sustainable community-based outdoor recreation and backcountry eco/adventure tourism development in the Kispiox Forest District.

Study Purpose

As the provincial tourism industry grows, demand for the Super, Natural experiences that have become the signature tourism product for the province will continue to increase. This study aims to support integrated resource and community planning to promote regional economic, social and environmental sustainability. Through updating the existing tourism baseline information and examining the region's tourism development potential, this study attempts to assist with: diversifying the regional economy; maintaining access to recreational resources for local residents; and minimizing conflicts among resource users. To achieve these goals, the purpose of this project is to:

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[1] Note: Following the Provincial elections, the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism & Culture was eliminated. This former Ministry's major tourism functions have been transferred into two new Ministries, namely: the Ministry of Competition, Science & Enterprise and the Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management.

- Update and enhance existing Forest Recreation Resource Inventory (FRRI) and Tourism Resource Inventory (TRI) data;
- Conduct research and analysis to identify land and resource issues that have a bearing on tourism and recreation development;
- Based on the above, identify the best opportunities for ecotourism and adventure travel development and make recommendations for their support and development; and
- Prepare an Action Plan that communities and government agencies can undertake to develop tourism opportunities in the region.

In addition to identifying key opportunities for tourism development, this report identifies important issues and constraints, which may threaten potential tourism growth in the study area.

It should be noted that this analysis is neither meant to be exclusive nor exhaustive. Rather, a major study objective is to identify products featuring the best development capability based on a combination of natural resources, market potential and local suitability. The ultimate value of this project is in identifying key opportunities and actions required to assist in the priority-setting of key players in tourism planning, and in providing further direction to communities, business people and organizations involved in tourism development in the region.

Study Objectives

The primary focus of this study's analysis is based on commercial outdoor recreation in the Kispiox Plan Area and surrounding lands of interest to the Gitxsan First Nation. Five major objectives involved in developing this TOS include:

1. Preparing an inventory of tourism operators, facilities, features, areas of use and infrastructure. Strategies involved to conduct this include: building on existing Forest Recreation and Tourism Resource Inventory (TRI) data; using existing data, previous studies, and first hand interviews and surveys of area tourism operators; identifying land and resource issues with a bearing on tourism development; and providing summary statistics on existing tourism activities.

2. Creating maps outlining the potential of the natural resource base to support defined tourism activities. Strategies involved to conduct this include: identifying up to 10 products/activities with high development suitability; reviewing the 1996 Northwest TRI product capability modelling; preparing an initial set of maps by adjusting the baseline using a feature-based methodology; modifying product maps with input from industry and local community experts; and inorporating constraints where applicable and available.

3. Undertaking an economics-based analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT). Strategies involved to conduct this include: using latest market research and

information gathered through surveys and interviews; incorporating results of inventory compilation; and describing tourism opportunities in 10 tourism product areas.

4. Preparing a local ecotourism development Action Plan. Strategies involved to conduct this include: consulting with local stakeholders (elected officials, planning agencies, community groups, First Nations, tourism operators and recreational organizations); incorporating local concerns, constraints and issues about tourism planning; and preparing action plans which communities could follow in developing their tourism economies.

Study Methodology

To successfully conduct this TOS, a number of work steps were involved. These included:

- Establishing a Local Advisory Committee (LAC) to guide the study and provide an opportunity for community involvement in the TOS.
- Reviewing previous studies to summarize of tourism opportunities.
- Surveying tourism operators, recreation groups, and agencies to identify information on existing operations and tourism opportunities.
- Compiling data through collecting, updating, refining and organizing information from government agencies and tourism operators.
- Conducting a preliminary product and community analysis report to identify key tourism opportunities.
- Establishing a status report and maps summarizing the process and its preliminary results.
- Conducting a tourism analysis to identify opportunities and related information in more detail, with specific implementation recommendations submitted as Draft Report.
- Finalizing the report and data to incorporate all reports, analysis, and map folios. Digital mapping adhered to provincial standards.

To assess tourism interests of the Gitxsan Nation, this TOS conducted a specific review of tourism issues, values and development interests of this First Nations community. Using watershed boundaries for planning units, an expanded area of review (tailored to Gitxsan Nation's traditional territories) and comprehensive communications initiatives, local tourism interests, development initiatives, and a SWOT analysis were articulated.

Based on the above initiatives, the following steps review the key components of Kispiox TOS. These include an overview of: BC's tourism industry and the Kispiox study area; land use planning and resource management in the study area; tourism resources of the Kispiox; the tourism opportunity analysis and tourism action plans.

BC's Tourism Industry

BC's tourism industry is a vital and vibrant component of the provincial economy. In 1999, provincial tourism revenue totalled $9.2 billion, a 4.9% increase over 1998. This involved hosting approximately 22.3 million overnight visitors and employing an estimated 110,780 people, or 7.6%

of the provincial labour force. Over a ten-year period, tourism employment rose 12.1% between 1990 to 1999 and contributed $2.3 billion in 1999 alone in wages and salaries.

Other impressive tourism industry statistics include the establishment of 17,075 tourism-related business operations in BC in 1999: a 2.2% increase from 1998, accounting for approximately 1 in 9 provincial business start-ups. Tourism industry growth figures within the provincial GDP include 0.7% in 1998, totalling $4.3 billion and accounting for 4.8% of the total provincial GDP. Furthermore, where traditional export industries ship commodities to markets in other countries, in tourism the consumers (markets) travel to the product. In 1999, $4.0 billion of BC's tourism revenue was earned in foreign exchange representing an increase of 8.2% over 1998 and a 35.5% increase since 1995.

For rural BC, the tourism industry's ability to create new and relatively stable long-term jobs for local residents is positive at a time when primary resource industries are experiencing economic downturns. The tourism sector also assists in promoting economic diversification in rural communities. In fact, because the majority of money spent generation is imported from other geographic regions; research suggests that tourism expenditures can multiply by five to seven times in local communities. Tourism in rural areas also acts as a 'recruiting' and revitalizing device to attract new residents and businesses to an area. Finally, the tourism industry facilitates exceptional lifestyle and entrepreneurial opportunities.

Ecotourism focuses on experiencing natural or indigenous culture in a way that minimizes impacts. Appealing to a global market, BC's high quality and diverse natural scenery offers competitive conditions for the province's expanding eco-adventure tourism sector. On a provincial scale, the value of ecotourism is estimated to be $350 million annually - the fastest growing segment of the BC tourism sector. With strong North American interests in ecotourism products, opportunities for expansion of BC's ecotourism sector is substantial.

In addition to an expanding outdoor adventure/ecotourism market, this niche market is also changing. This involves factors regarding access and opportunities to enjoy these products and technological change in the products offered. Access to a secure land base is crucial to ensure the continued ability to offer quality adventure tourism and ecotourism products. Technological innovations affect the adventure recreation experience in its ability to improve access / transportation, comfort, safety, communications and information. Lesser skilled participants are now more able to partake in activities at the more extreme end of the spectrum. The significance of increasingly sophisticated technology is its ability to continue to stimulate participation and open up new opportunities for business and market development.

Given that future tourism growth in Canada and BC will be driven by interest in outdoor experiences, particularly those in the soft adventure market and ecotourism, a number of implications for tourism development in the study area arise. The Kispiox region has many of the attributes needed to appeal to these markets, however, development will depend on key responses. Operators must understand the risk-reward relationship and provide the features and amenities that have the strongest appeal for local travel markets. These tend to be in the soft adventure category. They must incorporate technology and innovation so as to broaden market appeal for activities in demand, and improve their own competitiveness. They must seek greater co-operation with land managers and communities to ensure the Crown land base recognizes the demands and needs of tourism as a legitimate resource user. Communities must play a more prominent role by furnishing infrastructure and support services that underpin the industry and the employment and regional income benefits it can bring to local residents.

Kispiox TOS Plan Area

The Kispiox Forest District (FD), covering 1.2 million hectares, is one of seven Forest Districts in the Prince Rupert Forest Region. The Skeena, Kispiox and Bulkley Rivers traverse the area. The Kispiox Valley lies at the central portion of the Northcoast district and contains the communities of Hazelton and New Hazelton (combined estimated population of 1,187 in 1995). The Upper Kispiox and Seven Sisters planning areas lie in the northwest and southwest portions of the FD respectively. Together, these areas account for approximately 7.8% of the total FD land base and comprise 6.3% of the total timber harvesting land base in this FD.

Forestry, manufacturing, transportation and the education service sectors form the core economic base in the local economy with the forest industry being the most important in the Kispiox TSA. After forestry, tourism is the other major private contributor to the Upper Skeena economy. The average age of the local population has historically been lower than the provincial average. The workforce in the Kispiox has a lower level of education than the BC workforce. The average Kitimat-Stikine income has remained close to the BC average income during this period.

Outdoor recreation activities in the region include fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, hiking, camping, kayaking, canoeing, rafting, cross-country and downhill skiing, snowmobiling, horseback trail riding, and mountaineering. Several areas in the TSA possess high quality wilderness recreation opportunities and attract visitors from the US and overseas.

The Gitx̱san First Nation

The Kispiox forest district area and surrounding lands are home to more than 7,000 people of the Gitx̱san First Nation. Accounting for more than 80% of the population of the study area, the Gitx̱san continue to use the area's land and resources for spiritual, cultural, and economic subsistence activities. In an area where 80% unemployment is the norm, activities such as trapping, mushroom harvesting and a commercial inland fishery constitute a critical input for the cash economy.

For administrative purposes, the Gitx̱san Treaty Office organized the House groups on a watershed basis in the 1990s. Watershed units have a basis in the traditional system in that House groups who share boundaries, or are nearby one another, have more interaction over the sharing and conservation of natural resources.

The Gitx̱san have become increasingly interested in exploring and developing ecotourism, adventure travel and cultural tourism opportunities. At present, the Gitx̱san operate the most important existing tourism attraction in the study area – the world renowned 'Ksan Historical Village. This wonderful facility already attracts an estimated 50,000 visitors a year to Hazelton. As such, 'Ksan provides a very significant existing tourism base upon which to build.

With a strong interest in supporting a TOS in Gitxsan territory, an agreement was made with MSBTC to incorporate a larger area to reflect more of the claimed traditional territory, as well as to examine tourism issues and values in the context of the Gitxsans' nine identified watershed administration units (an overview of the methods is provided in the general methodology section).

Land Use Planning & Resource Management in the Study Area

Tourism development in BC is expanding at rates well beyond overall economic growth rates. An increasing part of the industry is oriented to outdoor recreation products that rely in large part on access to the Crown land and resource base. The importance of Crown land to tourism industry development is seen in literature produced by the Council of Tourism Associations of British Columbia (COTA). At the annual BC Tourism Industry Conference, the industry ranked land use and marketing as the two top issues of concern for tourism in the province. Land use planning that values tourism interests, involvement of tourism interests in land use decisions, the availability of Crown land for purchase and tenure and relations between tourism and the forest industry were key issues.

Some progress has been made in recent years to improve tourism representation in the land use decision-making process. The Land and Resource Management Planning (LRMP) process has at least created a forum for discussing multiple use and sustainability concepts and tourism's possible role. The Tourism Opportunity Strategy (TOS) is a further step to sound land use because they profile the current status of local tourism development, provide detailed information required for sub-regional or community level planning, and can be used to identify, develop and promote appropriate, sustainable tourism development opportunities.

A number of Provincial agencies play a role managing tourism values and activities. This includes the following: Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management (MSRM), British Columbia Assets and Land Corporation (BCAL); Ministry of Water, Land & Air Protection (MWLAP – formerly MELP -- includes BC Parks), Ministry of Forests (MoF). Other relevant Crown corporations and agencies either directly or indirectly involved in tourism include: BC Fisheries, Tourism BC and the BC Environmental Assessment Office.

Approved in April of 1996, the Kispiox Land and Resource Management Plan (KLRMP) is a sub-regional plan comprised of approximately 1.1 million hectares in Northwestern British Columbia. A number of planning directives were established concerning visual quality, recreation and tourism applying to nine Resource Management Zones (RMZs). Additional tourism, recreation and visual quality directives were assigned to specific RMZs. Additional planning processes relevant to tourism in the Kispiox Plan Area include the: Babine Local Resource Management Plan and Management Direction Statements for the Seven Sisters and Babine River Corridor Provincial Parks.

Tourism Profile of the Kispiox Plan Area

Featuring rolling alpine, jagged peaks, rock bluffs, white and flat-water rivers, and lakes, the Kispiox Plan Area is well suited for summer-based water and mountain based activities. In more remote areas (Bell II), superior snow quality and depth offer tremendous winter opportunities. Wildlife and sports fish species compliment these features. The rich cultural landscape of the area also fosters a unique experience for both visitors and residents alike.

Since the 1973 opening of the Cassiar highway, the Hazeltons have become a popular stop-over for Americans and Canadians traveling to Alaska and the territories. Highway improvements and increased ferry traffic through Prince Rupert have contributed to the growing highway tourism market. The Kispiox is also becoming increasingly recognized as a tourist destination in its own right. Quality scenery and recreational opportunities, such as fishing, hiking and camping, are attracting growing numbers of wilderness and adventure tourists. One of the most popular and well-known built facilities is 'Ksan, a Gitxsan village replica constructed in 1970.

Existing accommodation in the plan area includes six campgrounds/RV parks, two hotels/motels and two lodges. Except for the lodges, most of these facilities are clustered along Highways 16 and 37. The Kispiox plan area also supports guided activities, operators and other tourism-related businesses based out of other areas, with Smithers being a significant hub, especially for commercial backcountry recreation activities.

A 1991 study of tourism in Northwestern BC revealed that tourism in this area is linked to the area's natural features, particularly for the non-resident component. According to 1989 figures, 27 percent of resident travelers and 59 percent of non-resident travelers had a trip purpose that was natural resource-based. The Kispiox TSA has exceptional natural attributes that make the area attractive to both resident and non-resident travelers. They are as follows:

- High quality recreational fishing opportunities including a Class 1 (Babine) river and six class 2 rivers.
- Abundant and diverse wildlife, including grizzly bear, caribou and goat populations which provide excellent opportunities for wildlife viewing and hunting;
- Numerous mountain ranges and valleys offering a variety of opportunities for a broad range of outdoor activities, including rock climbing, ice climbing, hiking, trail riding, cross-country skiing and downhill skiing; and,
- Numerous lakes and rivers offering a variety of opportunities for water-based recreation including kayaking, canoeing, rafting and fishing.

The Kispiox's natural attributes indicate potential to expand the tourism industry, but other areas in BC have similar attributes and compete for market share. Southern regions have the advantage of being easily accessible from the province's large population centres. However, the Hazeltons area offers wilderness opportunities, which are diminishing as resources are developed in the more accessible regions of the province. If wilderness opportunities in the Kispiox are maintained the region's appeal to visitors may increase.

Using feature and landscape attributes and accessibility as criteria, two planning units were identified. These include the remote, roadless northern half of the plan are, with boundaries defined by the 3 northern Gitxsan watersheds; and the roaded, largely accessible southern half an area. The Northern Unit provides remote back country recreation opportunities and is characterized by rolling ridges with jagged peaks, extensive alpine., lakes, and rivers including the Babine (from the Bulkley Forest District), Sustut, Skeena Rivers. The Southern Unit provides mid- to backcountry recreation opportunities and is signified by dramatic ranges with extensive alpine and subalpine, icefields, rivers and lakes.

UNIT	FOCUS
Southern	Ashman Range, Mt. Sir Robert Range, Seven Sisters, Kispiox River, Kispiox Mtn., Thomlinson, Kitwanga/Skeeena West/Fiddler, Atna, Sicintine Range, Babine Lake and River, Thoen French Range,
Northern	Bell II, Driftwood/Sustut/Bear, Sicintine Range, Driftwood Ranges

In the North by Northwest Tourism Region, outdoor/adventure tourism products represented 14% of all non-resident visitor activity in 1991 (6% above the BC average). The potential for growth in this sector depends, in part, on maintaining high quality mid and backcountry recreational experiences. Sports fishing and fishing lodge industries are largely dependent on fishing quality as well as scenic beauty and remoteness, which clients rate highly.

The northwest region is famous for its trophy sized steelhead from the Skeena system. Rainbow trout are also a prized species. There are 55 guiding licences and over 9 000 angling days approved for the Kispiox. As with guide-outfitting, increasing access to remote areas will reduce the wilderness quality of the sports fishing product, which could impact these operations. Allocation of fish between commercial, aboriginal and local recreational fisheries is also a contentious issue.

Hunting opportunities include moose, deer, wolf, mountain goat, caribou, grizzly and black bear. Approximately 81% of guided clients are from the US. There are two licensed guide-outfitters operating entirely within the TSA, and another 11 whose areas are either partly within or adjoin the TSA boundaries. The main concern of guide-outfitters is maintaining wilderness hunting experiences for the international market. As more roads go into these areas, hunting activity by local residents could increase, leading to more hunting pressures which would affect guide-outfitter operations.

The interest in adventure tourism has stimulated growth in the number of businesses offering unique adventure tourism products. Some guide-outfitters and fishing lodge operators are becoming involved in adventure tourism as well. Adventure tourism products which are viable in the Kispiox include:

- ice climbing, ski mountaineering and rock climbing courses and packages;
- day trip or week long dog sled excursions;
- rafting and canoeing trips;
- guided snowmobile tours;
- guided trail rides;
- guided day hikes and backpacking tours;
- outdoor education programs; and
- guided back-country skiing.

These operations rely on a relatively unspoiled natural resource base. To date, the scenic, wildlife and wilderness attributes of the area have made it a viable contender in the outdoor/adventure tourism market. However, increased access and resource development may reduce the potential for this component of the tourism industry to provide stable jobs and income in the long-term.

Based on a workshop held with tourism stakeholders in Hazelton, a number of opportunities and concerns were voiced regarding existing and potential tourism operations in the plan area. A number of strengths, concerns and potentials were discussed and a short list of priority tourism opportunities was developed. These include: cultural and historical activities, agri-tourism, hiking/backpacking, nature observation, rafting/kayaking/drifting, camping, eco-backroad touring, climbing/mountaineering and a number of other opportunities including art-based tourism.

Visitor Trends

Access to up-to-date and pertinent visitor research is fundamental to the successful design, development and operation of a tourism service or product. Over the past number of years, provincial visitor survey initiatives have less than effectively surveyed visitors to this area of the province. The main item of concern is the lack of visitor survey / contact points addressing the Highway #37 "North To Alaska" highway corridor. Survey contact points have been facilitated along the Highway #16 corridor (usually Prince George & Prince Rupert) but visitors entering or exiting the region via the Highway #37 corridor are mostly missed during these provincial visitor surveys. In recognition that a vast number of visitors to the study area utilize this corridor, regional data summations are weak in this respect. Data from the 1995/96 Provincial Visitor Study is used in this study to review visitor information for North West BC (NWBC).

With respect to visitor volume and value, an estimated 2.2 million visitors travelled to NWBC for a day or overnight trip, 73% of who are residents of BC. The total NWBC share of provincial visitation is about 7%. Visitors to NWBC spend about $425 million per season with non-residents accounting for 33% of this spending and residents accounting for 67% of regional revenues. An average of $54 is spent per day during their stay with non-residents spending about $234 per stay compared to residents spending about $178 per stay. The total NWBC share of provincial tourism revenues is about 5%. Length of stay per visit in the area averages at 4.4 days for non-residents and 3.4 days for resident visitors.

The greatest number of visitors to the area originates from other parts of northern BC (55%). This is followed by other Canadians (38%), close-in and long-haul US visitors (23% and 17% respectively). Overseas visitors account for about 13% of the area's visitors. The Kitimat/Stikine Regional District captures approximately 29% of the area's non-resident visitors.

The main trip focus for tourists was for leisure purposes (81% non-residents and 86% residents). Other Canadians and US visitors were the most likely markets (21%) to have traveled for business purposes. Non-residents averaged 44 years of age and Long Haul/Overseas markets tended to be older with 38% aged 55 years and older. Summer season is by far the busiest tourism season in NWBC, however, high potential to expand winter-based tourism opportunities exists.

While in Northwestern BC, non-resident visitors showed substantial interest in a number of activities including visiting art galleries/museums/exhibits (25%), city/town sightseeing (16%) and freshwater fishing (15%). Virtually all resident visitors (93%) spent time visiting with friends and relatives during their visit to NWBC compared to only 8% of non-resident visitors.

During their trip to BC, non-resident visitors enjoyed a number of outdoor activities including wildlife viewing/bird watching (50%), visiting National or Provincial parks (43%), freshwater or saltwater fishing (16%). In addition, many non-resident tourists visited attractions such as historic sites (43%), art galleries/museums (28%) as well as First Nations cultural sites (26%). BC residents travelling in BC also partook in outdoor activities including sightseeing (41%) and wildlife viewing/bird watching (33%), hiking/backpacking (24%), and visiting attractions such as historic sites (31%).

Visitor spending by non-resident visitors included package tours purchased in BC (28%). Food, beverages and accommodation represent approximately one-half of the total tourism monies spent in BC (46%) by regional visitors, close-in 'other' Canadians and US visitors. A substantial proportion of expenditures also went towards transportation (18%) and package tours purchased in BC (16%) from the two latter groups. Regional visitors spent an additional 15% on accommodations while travelling in the region.

Tourism Product Selection

Over 50 potential tourism activities identified by MSBTC were evaluated by the consulting team to determine those with the greatest potential for outdoor recreation-based tourism development in the Kispiox Forest District and the Gitxsan Area of Interest. A short-list was generated and presented to the LAC team. Based on this, chosen tourism products were grouped or singled out and include:

- Front & mid-country adventure
- Summer trail products
- Nature Observation/Heritage Interpretation
- Nordic Skiing/Ski Touring
- Fresh Water Activity: Non-motorized and Motorized
- Air Tour and Access
- Road Tour
- Destination Lodge / Hut system

These products can be regarded as the best short-term options for outdoor recreation-based tourism development. However none exist in isolation, and opportunities to build on clusters of tourism products or where products could be linked are extremely important and are described in this report. Criteria used to assess these products include: product line and delivery, complementary product lines, product enhancement, development considerations and other comments. A suitability analysis for each of these potential products was conducted and mapped.

A community and tourism product-match analysis conducted for Kitwanga and the Hazeltons was conducted. The following possible development opportunities for these communities occur: front and mid-country adventure, ski touring, summer trail, nature observation/cultural heritage, whitewater kayaking and rafting, flatwater boating, destination lodge, hut systems.

Tourism Opportunity Analysis

Air Tour and Access

The Air Tour and Access Product is associated with scenic touring as well as providing access to and opportunities for mountain biking, paragliding, hiking, skiing and fishing. It utilizes the diversity of helicopters and the affordability of fixed wing aircraft. It compliments many tourism activity products. It has two components:

- An air tour allows tourists an opportunity to view surrounding landscapes while experiencing flying. Tours are best limited to an hour. Dramatic landscapes or diverse features are essential.
- The air access tour contains an air tour component but it is primarily to get recreationists to where they want to be. Turn around time from the base to the delivery area should be done within the shortest time possible and is most suited for the helicopter.

The potential for flight-related outdoor activities in the Kispiox is average because of the area's remoteness; however, Hazelton, Kitwanga and possibly Bell II could be developed as staging areas for the surrounding region, while the existence of small airstrips in the Sustut could lead to air tours and linkages to other activities in the northeast. Competition from Smithers-based operators and the overall low tourism volumes will ultimately limit the potential.

Destination Lodge/Hut System

There are many opportunities for themed development in the Kispiox, as alpine, river and cultural heritage facilities could all be developed. Establishing linkages with existing tourism operators who have commercial recreation tenure for complementary activities (e.g. wildlife viewing, hiking, and kayaking) would help development. By being multi-activity and multi-season, lodges should be in a better position to manage their cash flow and staff.

Opportunity for a First Nations lodge for cultural interpretation and exposition are very positive. Linkages to 'Ksan or any number of heritage sites in the region could create a critical mass of tourism activity in the area. It could be linked to hiking, biking, trail riding, agri-tourism, cultural interpretation and wildlife viewing (salmon). However, some heritage sites will not be suitable for interpretation or development and tourism development policies and protocols would have to be drawn up so any new initiatives have the support of the local communities.

Fresh Water Activity - Motorized & Non-Motorized

The water activity product includes an array of recreation activities, including whitewater kayaking (adventure product), rafting, canoeing (non-motorized water product) and jet boating (motorized water product). Complementary features such as sport fish, waterfalls, rapids, pools, ledges, standing waves and other water features allow for more diverse product development.

There is moderate potential in the soft adventure/participant category for domestic, short-haul and German markets. All of these markets are seeking a broader outdoor adventure experience and will decide to participate in recreational paddling once in the region. The Kispiox has a range of close-in/remote adventures. Native cultural interpretation, nature observation, wildlife viewing and fishing are also attractants for these markets. The German market, especially, is interested in wildlife viewing. Multi-activity packaging and interpretation is essential.

The major constraining factor is a lack of grade 3+ water that would attract enthusiasts and adventure seekers. Also, the area does not boast a lakes series with connecting waterways and portage routes which are usually preferred over single, isolated large lakes. Lakes connected in such a manner may provide opportunities for multi-day wilderness paddling trips. This should focus attention more on the casual participant interested in the softer, short duration adventures. Kayaking, rafting and fishing will be of more interest to the existing regional and short-haul travellers (western US and Canada) to the region, more so than canoeing.

The ability to package sport fishing, nature observation, historical interpretation with boating activities can help operators diversify, but avoidance of high use locations will be necessary to minimize conflicts with other users.

Front and Mid Country Adventure

The Front and Mid Country Adventure Product is focused on the recreational enthusiast. The activities identified are those specific to the resources available to the population and access centres within the study area, these include whitewater kayaking, rafting, ski mountaineering, mountaineering, rock climbing, downhill mountain biking and paragliding.

There is good potential to expand the adventure product in the Kispiox. Providing basic infrastructure, as well as teaching and instruction, will be the challenge however, as all of these sports have an "extreme" component. The proximity of the climbing and river resources to Highway 16 means communities that develop infrastructure and tourism services should be able to make them available to other travel markets.

Cultural Heritage Interpretation

The viewing of heritage, culture, wildlife and nature in general are principal components of ecotourism. As growth of the ecotourism industry continues, the region can benefit through increased marketing of their significant assets and developing further infrastructure that meets the demand for a range of products, from rustic to full-service.

The overall potential for the development of this product in the Kispiox is excellent, primarily in the areas of First Nations interpretation. 'Ksan has given the area some destination recognition. Higher levels of interpretation and alternate programming will have to be undertaken to expand the appeal to already busy touring travellers. Survey data indicates that educational trips are a growing attractant for this group of travellers.

The study area offers some unique opportunities in general nature tours, First Nations interpretation, and to a lesser extent, wildlife viewing. First Nations interpretation has potential to offer a complementary experience to other, primary products. Also of interest to travel markets are the viewing opportunities related to other natural resources in the study area, including glaciers, alpine areas and parks/protected areas.

Nordic Skiing/Ski Touring

There are three general types of nordic skiing: cross-country skiing (undertaken on groomed trails), light-touring (usually involves front to mid-country excursions), and backcountry ski touring (involves single or multi-day trips/excursions). There is potential for some immediate modest growth in the local, regional and international adventure recreation markets, principally among winter backcountry users. Focused promotional efforts will be required to increase exposure, and in this sense, not having any national parks in the region is a disadvantage. In the Canadian Rockies, Parks Canada is actively trying to convert more international visitors from touring travellers to ecotourists (and thereby consumers of ski touring products). Again, this may be best achieved by associating the activity with hut or lodge-based operations.

In spite of the favourable market trends, the ski touring product will be difficult to expand in the Kispiox. The main area of competition is the southern Canadian Rockies (Jasper, Canmore, Banff, Golden, Revelstoke) where the product quality is recognized worldwide and heavily promoted by both the national and provincial park systems. Even commercial operators there have difficulty attracting clientele because between the park system and local alpine clubs and societies, there is relatively inexpensive access to the public backcountry hut system. The best commercial potential will be for ski touring packaged around lodge and resort development. There is some opportunity for multi-activity packages involving activities such as downhill skiing (Hudson's Bay Mountain or Shames), cross-country skiing, snowmobiling and ice climbing.

The potential for cross-country skiing is only moderate because of the lack of infrastructure and accommodation. While natural features such as varied terrain are important, the built environment is critical – that means things like night lighting, parking, clear signage, high-quality and well-maintained equipment, transportation services and the availability of multi-activity packages can really broader the appeal, but will take a long period of development in the Kispiox.

Road Touring

Road touring focuses on driving and sightseeing, both on highway and in cities/towns. While primarily self-guided, guided bus and motorcoach tours are also considered. Area related cassette tapes have also been used to enhance self-guided auto tours. Sightseeing is an activity very closely associated with automobile touring. There are opportunities for touring on gravel secondary roads where comfortable and safety equipped large sport utility vehicles are a preferred mode of transport.

Road tours require high scenic values and corresponding viewpoints and points of interest. Tours can be linked to a destination with an outstanding feature, lodge, community or as part of a greater regional / provincial tour. Tours can be linear or circle. A tour can be part of other tours such as a water cruise and rail tour.

Road tours are ideal for those individuals seeking an adventure in safety and comfort and for those who do not choose or are unable to take their own vehicles.

Summer Trail Products

Trail products include hiking (generally frontcountry, mid-country or from a lodge), backpacking (midcountry/backcountry), animal assisted, such as llama or horse packing (primarily backcountry) or horseback riding (front country to backcountry). The activities take place on trails or off trail, terrain permitting. Trail riding and hiking have some good potential in the region due to some accessible quality resources, some good trail systems and visitor markets that place a high value on hiking activity. Among visitors to Northwest BC hiking/backpacking is the third most important outdoor activity among non-residents. The potential for commercial hiking tours spans a full range of options from multi-day trekking tours to short interpreted tours of the frontcountry.

Many hiking participants become repeat clients, so increasing the opportunity for new experiences should increase the potential for repeat customers. Communities in the study area have a range of hiking products they can package with cultural, heritage and other nature-oriented activities. Further interpretation of unique features like the lakes and river system and First Nations would significantly enhance the frontcountry hiking product.

While trail development and interpretation is important, building a better trail product in the Kispiox region will also require effective marketing and promotion to attract Highway 16 travellers. The production and distribution of self-guiding aides, including trail books, books, maps and web sites could increase participation levels.

Commercial operators must provide additional value to gain customers, either through a quality experience (not only the hike but interpretation, meals and lodging) and/or adding other desired activities, which the customers cannot do on their own.

Tourism Action Plans

Tourism Action Plans focus on broader tourism and community development issues that have implications for product development. The focus here is on correcting weaknesses and gaps that may impede development. Without the basic building blocks of economic development, communities will find it difficult to attract and grow the investment, entrepreneurship, labour and infrastructure needed to create high value tourism.

Key development challenges include the following: developing local commitment, preparing highly suitable tourism products for the market, developing quality and competitive tourism products, and attracting the required financing and investment capital for tourism development. Through extensive community consultation, two main community challenges also arise. These include developing appropriate and inclusive adventure products and expanding the economic benefits derived from tourism development locally.

Based on these challenges, a number of regional and community recommendations have been developed. This report summary concludes with these recommendations:

- **Implementation**: distribute the TOS products and prioritize key initiatives; establish a one-year action plan to identify and conduct high priority tasks; prepare short-list of financial assistance programs to assist with implementation and review these programs; prepare short-list of outdoor recreation development programs and prioritize application targets; prepare/circulate a brief "Tourism Financing" fact sheet.

- **Joint Tourism Planning:** form a study area action committee to collaborate on ecotourism development issues; compare/share information and identify areas to collaborate; pursue funding sources; establish annual tourism symposium; compile previous value and vision statements and identify any common themes; assess tourism development affects in other communities and prepare case studies to enhance local knowledge; develop a community consultation methodology to express clear vision statements.

- **Community Positioning and Marketing**: conduct a marketing audit; identify key partners to provide assistance and resources in building a plan; evaluate the community's best tourism assets, job and income potential, basic weaknesses and methods to reduce/eliminate these; assess community "preparedness" (e.g. appearance, facilities); identify community's unique attributes; establish a common marketing image for branding in advertising and promotion; develop marketing positions around ecotourism products/features; conduct annual visitor surveys to generate reliable travel market data; generate reliable visitor information to assist with planning and development.

- **Lobbying:** prepare tourism industry position statement on the regulation of the sport fishery in the region; undertake economic impact analyses or case studies to draw attention to the impacts various issues have on tourism activity and community development; develop partnerships with sport groups and organizations who share similar interests to develop shared strategies for communicating with senior governments and major industry; initiate a communications campaign with WestJet promoting Smithers Airport for new commercial service.

- **Communications**: prepare communications plan to promote positive tourism-related community events; develop database of key media/political contacts; identify corporate partnership opportunities with local industry; prepare annual report card on tourism development progress in the region; prepare a newspaper tourism column with collaboration by EDOs and chambers; investigate a "*tourist in your own town*" program to stimulate local tourism.

- **Commercial Recreation Tenure:** monitor use of existing tenures to determine under-utilization; lobby BCALC to ensure that community needs are factored into the approval process for commercial recreation tenure; encourage BCALC to adopt MOF's Small Business Forest Enterprise Program (SBFEP) assessment guidelines.

- **User Group Agreements:** Consider producing a recreation use code of ethics to assist commercial recreation operators self-manage conflicting use; identify areas where there may be concerns about Carrying Capacity or Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC).

- **First Nations Tourism Development:** conduct an aboriginal tourism development conference in the Hazeltons; ensure linkages between major aboriginal tourism organizations; investigate uses for programs currently offered to meet assist First Nations tourism development; promote joint ventures between experienced tour operators and First Nations.

- **Product Packaging:** seek professional technical assistance for entrepreneurs from the Province to build tourism packages particularly for small groups; identify a short-haul market for package promotion on a pilot basis; prepare and market product packages for the regional market; identify products/activities with the greatest appeal for the regional market; identify trade shows and fairs in Prince George where packages could be inexpensively marketed; encourage operators to increase exposure through regional tourism conferences; host a tourism workshop on packaging; identify a product package for promotion among interested operators, detailing composition and pricing; host multi-day familiarization (FAM) trips with a select group of tour operators and travel trade representatives; increase distribution of packages through visitor centres; encourage the establishment of additional inbound tour operators, focusing on increasing penetration of highway travellers for adventure product sales; use the FFTOS inventory of operators to assist with assessing packaging opportunities and for helping operators get in touch with one another; research mailing lists for tour operators in North America and long-haul markets who can be targeted for products available in the region; consider marketing in a cooperative marketing group; prepare product guide for the Kispiox area listing tourism services, an events calendar, accommodation guide, adventure and recreation operators, attractions and transportation services; identify who is currently providing packages within the region; share the product guide with all operators; work with NBCTA to take full advantage of Canadian Tourism Commission marketing and packaging programs.

- **Networking:** work with all communities in the region to prepare a regional tourism electronic database, update annually and distribute to all operators as a networking resource; share information on common issues; investigate the feasibility of forming a "Product Club" in the Kispiox area which could create year-round, barrier-free tour packages through an enhanced communication strategy, research to identify market potential, and a model that can be used in other regions.

- **Web Development:** evaluate web-site effectiveness; use the University of Illinois' "Thumbs Up – Evaluating Community Websites" tool for reviewing best practices in web site design; solicit examples of guided tours and packages that could be featured as a main tourism page on the regional websites; maintain a tourism links page to important tourism websites as a reference for local tourism stakeholders; undertake steps for gathering more information and data-mining from website visitors; identify target Internet sites for co-marketing or placement of creative banner ads to link regional websites.

- **Research & Information:** undertake market research on backcountry products, markets and trends, and using the web site as the main venue for communication; establish ecotourism resource library in the Kispiox; develop a one-time project proposal for creating an instant library locally; promote the existence of MoF recreation maps to visitor markets to increase awareness of the full range of possible outdoor activities; prepare "Good Practices" manual for distribution to new operators; produce and distribute a tourism business planning guide for local entrepreneurs; ask banks to assist with outlining financial planning requirements for operators

- **Investment Attraction:** encourage completion of a tourism development site guide; actively identify and promote sites with favourable development prospects; seek government (BCALC, MoF) cooperation on inter-agency approach to the marketing of tourism tenures; prepare a handbook for helping tourism developers negotiate the land use process to establish their business; establish an investor's guide to target tourism projects.

- **Signage & Gateways:** develop a Kispiox-Kalum route connecting the Kispiox Valley to Highway 37 north; establish a partnership of interested organizations, including Upper Skeena

Tourism Association, chambers of commerce and economic development commissions; develop a route name; develop a theme and design concept for presentation to MoTH; prepare a regional Signage Design Manual in conjunction with the regional district and municipalities; develop a set of consistent themes that will appear on signs.

- **Highway Improvements:** establish a rural highways and roads taskforce to investigate development priorities in the region and determine road budget priorities; for the Kispiox Connector and other possible circle routes, prepare a marketing/transportation strategy to support longer-term investment; prepare a brief outlining the major economic activities on the road and how provincial government revenues are benefiting from local resource activities.

- **Trail Development:** assemble research on best practices of trail development; review Parks Canada's best practices examples for trail development; undertake a community recreation plan dedicated to trail system development; lobby MoF to increase recreation budget regarding trail maintenance; research user-pay system for ongoing trail maintenance; prepare a pre-feasibility of heritage trail development in the Kispiox; review status of management planning with MoF and MSBTC on these systems; request assistance from MSBTC and NBCTA for assistance in plan development; investigate the feasibility of tapping into the E-Team Program for trail development in the Kispiox.

- **Tourism Training & Education:** promote tourism career opportunities to the workforce; identify ways to increase partnerships between operators and students (e.g. guide mentoring or apprenticing program). A mentorship program can be highly effective method of in-the-field training; expand use of NBCTA training opportunities; encourage the use of SuperHost tourism training program developed by Tourism BC.

- **Entrepreneurial Skill Development:** assess demand and potential for young entrepreneur programs; support career preparation programs that support both entrepreneurship and tourism/recreation; assess feasibility of Kitimat Skills Centre delivery of short-duration seminars and courses targeted at existing operators; encourage the local skills centre to expand into tourism training; survey operators to gauge the level of interest in courses.

1 Introduction

The tourism industry is one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world economy. In BC, tourism is already the province's second largest industry - generating $9.2 billion in revenues with some 16,700 tourism-related businesses employing over 113,000 BC workers. British Columbia's tourism industry is expected to grow steadily over the next three years with the influence of the maturing baby boomer generation. With an increase in disposable income and leisure time, travel has become a priority for this segment of the population. There are also changes in the type of travel experiences being sought, with an increasing demand for specialty tours that cater to interests such as outdoor adventure, culture, education and wellness. Indeed, recent research would indicate that 'ecotourism' and 'adventure travel' is now the fastest growing segment of the tourism industry.

Many visitors to BC are already attracted to the province for its diverse natural beauty and outdoor recreational opportunities. Therefore, the province is perfectly poised to capitalize on the new opportunities for economic and employment growth possible from expansion in the ecotourism area. Rural BC communities, in particular, have a tremendous opportunity to expand and diversify their economic and employment base through land-based tourism development. Importantly, these opportunities for expansion in tourism are arriving at the same time that many rural BC communities are struggling with significant structural change in their traditional resource economies.

Recognizing both the challenges and opportunities presented by ecotourism expansion, the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism & Culture has developed a provincial Ecotourism Strategy as part of the provincial government's Green Economy Initiative. Meredith & Associates of Smithers was commissioned by the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture to undertake this Tourism Opportunity Study to identify opportunities for sustainable community-based outdoor recreation and backcountry eco/adventure tourism development in the Kispiox Forest District area.

1.1 Study Purpose

The Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture (MSBTC) has been contracting the preparation of tourism resource inventories (TRIs) with tourism capability modeling for over eight years. During that time, major strides have been made in the digital information available in the province, and planning efforts have been supported by ever-improving information. The entire province has been covered by tourism resource inventories at 1:250,000 and most of these have been updated within the past few years.

The TRIs are useful for land use planning of large regions, but more detailed information is required to assist with local area planning, both community and tourism business development. Information is needed to specifically lay a foundation for future economically, socially and environmentally feasible tourism opportunities. This will provide support for community-led tourism development within forest recreation areas and on other Crown and private land.

The information obtained through this project will improve on existing Tourism Resource Inventory (TRI) and Forest Recreation Resource Inventory (FRRI) data and will enable government to support the efforts of individuals, municipal governments, First Nations and tourism and recreation associations to:

- Diversify local economies;
- Maintain access to recreational resources for local residents; and
- Minimize conflicts among resource users.

The purpose of this project is to:

- Update and enhance existing FRRI and TRI data;
- Conduct research and analysis that will identify land and resource issues that have a bearing on tourism and recreation development;
- Based on the above-two steps, identify the best opportunities for ecotourism and adventure travel development and make recommendations for their support and development; and
- Prepare an Action Plan that communities and government agencies can undertake to develop tourism opportunities in the region.

As the provincial tourism industry grows, demand for the Super, Natural experiences that have become the signature tourism product for the province will continue to increase. This study should contribute to integrated resource and community planning targeted towards economic, social and environmental sustainability. In addition to identifying key opportunities for tourism development, this report identifies important issues and constraints that threaten the potential for tourism growth in the study area.

The analysis is not meant to be either exclusive or exhaustive. The study's objective is to identify those products with the best development capability based on a combination of natural resource, market potential and local suitability. The ultimate value of this project is in identifying key opportunities and actions required to assist in the priority-setting of key players in tourism planning, and in providing further direction to communities, business people and organizations involved in tourism development in the region.

1.2 Scope and Methodology

The primary focus of this study's analysis is on commercial outdoor recreation in the Kispiox Forest District area and the surrounding lands, which are of interest to the Gitxsan First Nations.

There were five major objectives for this project:

1. Prepare an inventory of tourism operators, facilities, features, areas of use and infrastructure

- Build on existing Forest Recreation and Tourism Resource Inventory (TRI) data
- Use existing data and previous studies where available
- Use first hand interviews and surveys of area tourism operators
- Identify land and resource issues with a bearing on tourism development
- Provide summary statistics on existing tourism activities

2. Create maps outlining the potential of the natural resource base to support defined tourism activities

- Identify up to 10 products/activities deemed to have the best suitability for development
- Review the 1996 Northwest TRI product capability modelling
- Prepare an initial set of maps by adjusting the baseline using a feature-based methodology
- Modify product maps with input from industry and local community experts
- Incorporate constraints where applicable and available

3. Develop a study methodology that incorporates Gitxsan First Nations interests

- Examine those land areas surrounding the Kispiox Forest District that are of interest to the Gitxsan First Nations
- Work with the Gitxsan First Nations within their cultural structure to identify and analyze tourism development potential
- Work with the Gitxsan First Nations to conduct a SWOT analysis for tourism development

4. Undertake an economics-based analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)

- Use latest market research plus information gathered through surveys and interviews
- Incorporate results of inventory compilation
- Describe tourism opportunities in 10 tourism product areas

5. Prepare a local ecotourism development Action Plan

- Consult with local stakeholders including elected officials, planning agencies, community groups, First Nations, tourism operators and recreational organizations
- Incorporate local concerns, constraints and issues about tourism planning
- Prepare action plans which communities could follow in developing their tourism economies

The **work steps** for this project included the following:

- Establishment of a **Local Advisory Committee** (LAC) to guide the study and provide an opportunity for community involvement in the TOS.
- **Review of previous studies** and summary of tourism opportunities.

- **Survey** of tourism operators, recreation groups, and agencies to identify information on existing operations and tourism opportunities. A total of 65 tourism contacts were identified as based in or operating in the study area. The response rate through survey and telephone interviews was 21%.
- **Data compilation –** collect, update, refine and organize information from government agencies and tourism operators.
- **Preliminary product and community analysis report** to identify key tourism opportunities.
- **Status report and maps** summarizing process and preliminary results.
- **Detailed tourism analysis** identifying opportunities and related information in more detail, with specific implementation recommendations submitted as Draft Report.
- **Final report and data** incorporating all reports, analysis, and map folios. Digital mapping format to provincial standards.

1.3 Report Structure

This report is organized into eight (8) overall Sections along with four (4) Annexes. The 'flow' of the document is as follows:

- ***Section 1*** – provides an ***introduction*** to the overall project;
- ***Section 2*** – provides an introduction and review of the *British Columbia tourism industry*, including a discussion of ecotourism trends;
- ***Section 3*** – provides a review and analysis of the *Kispiox Forest District*, its tourism resources as well as statistics regarding visitors to Northwestern BC;
- ***Section 4*** – provides a *tourism review of the Gitxsan First Nation Area of Interest*, which includes the Kispiox Forest District, as well as portions of the Bulkley, Fort St. James, Kalum and Cassiar Forest Districts. Also included in this section is a *SWOT analysis* of each of the nine (9) *Gitxsan Watershed Administration Units*;
- ***Section 5*** – provides a review and analysis of *land use planning and resource management* in the study area;
- ***Section 6*** – provides a review and analysis of *tourism resources in the Kispiox Forest District and the Gitxsan Areas of Interest*;
- ***Section 7*** – entails a detailed analysis of the most viable *tourism opportunities* within the study area; and
- ***Section 8*** – reviews *tourism issues* in the study area and goes on to provide regional *tourism development recommendations*.
- ***Annex A*** – contains the results of the tourism stakeholder survey and corresponding analysis of existing tourism operations;
- ***Annex B*** – contains tourism product pre-feasibility profiles for seven potential tourism products;
- ***Annex C*** – provides a list of acronyms used in this report; and
- ***Annex D*** – is a bibliography of resources utilized.

2 The BC Tourism Industry

The tourism industry within British Columbia is a vital and vibrant component of the British Columbia economy. The following statistics set the stage and assist in highlighting the need for effective tourism planning throughout the province[2].

2.1 Expenditures

Tourism revenue totalled $9.2 billion in 1999, a 4.9% increase over 1998. A major component of this growth came from the US market (up 6.8%), whose tourism expenditures injected a total of $2.3 billion into the provincial economy. Positive revenue growth in 1999 was also seen from the British Columbia, Canadian and European markets, up 1.5%, 3.2% and 9.3% respectively. The above revenue increases was concurrent with an increase of 11.1% from the Asia/Pacific region. Visitor spending among key markets varied with the length of stay and per day expenditures. For example, British Columbia residents represented 48% of total visitor volume last year but only 26% of the revenue as they spend less on average per visit than the longer haul visitor[3]. Conversely, overseas visitors contributed 18% of the total revenue while representing only 7% of the volume.

2.2 Target Market Volumes

In 1999, British Columbia hosted 22.3 million overnight visitors an increase of 2.1% from 1998. Nearly half (48%) of these visitors were British Columbia residents. Travelers from other parts of Canada accounted for 4.8 million visits (21.7%) a 1.7% increase over the previous year. A strong US economy, a growing awareness of British Columbia as a preferred travel destination and a very favourable exchange rate combined to lure Americans to British Columbia in record numbers in 1999. There was a 5.3% increase over 1998 and a 37% increase since 1994. South Korea and Taiwan were the Asia/Pacific countries to show the strongest positive growth in 1999, up 61.6% and -29.3% respectively. More Europeans visited British Columbia in 1999 (up 7.8%), driven mainly by the 12% growth from the UK market. The number of UK visits topped 267,000, nearly doubling the second largest market of Germany with 134,000.

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[2] Statistics in this section are sourced from The Value of Tourism Research Services Branch of Tourism British Columbia, February 2001.

[3] This does not account for any 'outfitting' expenditures BC residents spend in pursuing their various recreational activities (i.e.: equipment, clothing, education, skill development, etc.)

2.3 Employment in 1999

In the past, employment in the tourism industry was estimated through employment levels in tourism-related industries. More recently, direct employment data has become available, providing a more accurate count of the number of British Columbians employed directly as a result of tourism activity.

In 1999, this figure is estimated at 110,780 people[4], accounting for approximately 7.6% of the provincial labour force and ranking fifth in provincial employment among industry sectors. Tourism employment in British Columbia accounts for approximately 1-in-13 jobs in the province.

The Accommodation and Food & Beverage sectors accounted for approximately 26.0% and 26.9%, respectively, of tourism jobs in 1999. Other key sectors, in terms of tourism employment, were Retail & Wholesale Trade, which accounted for 19.1% of tourism jobs, and Transportation & Communication at 15.3%.

2.3.1 Growth in Tourism Employment

Tourism employment rose 12.1% in the 10year period from 1990 to 1999. The Food & Beverage sector led the growth in tourism employment, up 41.7% over 1990, while employment in the travel services sector declined by 26.7% during the same period.

2.3.2 Wages and Salaries

In 1999, wages and salaries in the tourism industry totaled $2.3 billion[5], which accounted for5.0% of the provincial total of $47.3 billion. Of this total (which does not include tips or gratuities), 30.6% ($717 million) was earned in the Transportation, Storage & Communication sector, followed by Retail ($482 million) and Accommodation ($443 million) sectors.

The average weekly earnings within the tourism industry in 1999 was $423, down 0.8% from 1998. Of all sectors, Transportation, Storage & Communication workers averaged the highest weekly earnings ($815) followed by Travel Services ($504) and Retail & Wholesale Trade ($437).

2.3.3 Tourism-Related Business Establishments

Another indicator of the level of tourism activity is the number of business establishments in tourism-related industries.

In 1999 there were 17,075 tourism-related business establishments operating in BC, up about 2.2% from 1998. Tourism-related business establishments accounted for approximately 1 in 9 of the province's 155,000 business establishments.

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[4] It should be noted that this figure does not include British Columbians who were self-employed in the tourism industry.

[5] 1999 figures are preliminary. BC Stats has changed methodology for estimating direct employment for all sectors and has provided historical tourism employment data, which represent these changes. TBC estimated the accommodation portion of tourism employment since a complete estimate was not available from Statistics Canada.

Nearly 9,400 — just over half — of the tourism-related businesses were in the Food & Beverage sector, which was down slightly from 1998 (-0.4%). There were just fewer than 1,900 accommodation properties, accounting for 10.9% of all tourism-related businesses.

2.4 Tourism GDP

Tourism Gross Domestic Product (GDP) provides a direct measure of the industry's economic impact on the provincial economy and permits comparisons with other industries. In essence, Tourism GDP measures the value added to the provincial economy by the tourism industry. This value added is equal to the revenue earned by the tourism industry less the cost of inputs either imported or purchased from other BC industries.

The Value of Tourism[6] reports GDP in both constant (1992) dollars and current dollars. Using constant dollars removes the impact of inflation and provides a clearer indication of real changes in economic activity. However, using GDP measured in constant dollars to make comparisons across industries understates the growth rate of industries whose prices have risen more rapidly than average as one gets further away from the base year (1992). Thus, both current and constant dollar GDP are useful when making comparisons across industries.

Based on a 1992 constant dollar, Tourism GDP rose 0.7% in 1998, over the previous year, to a total of $4.3 billion. Growth in Tourism GDP outpaced growth in provincial GDP, which was up 0.3% over 1997. In 1998, tourism accounted for 4.8% of the total provincial GDP of $89 billion. In terms of current dollars, Tourism GDP was $4.9 billion in 1998. Compared to resource-based industries, Tourism GDP was greater than that of Agriculture ($2.1 billion) and Fishing ($0.5 billion), and less than Forestry ($6.8 billion).

Tourism grew significantly in the ten-year period from 1989 to 1998. Using current dollars, Tourism GDP grew 57.4% from 1989 to 1998 while Agriculture grew 41.3%, Forestry decreased 2.5% and Fishing fell 13.3%. Tourism GDP grew from 45.1% of Forestry GDP in 1989 to 72.7% in 1998.

While useful for cross-industry comparisons, current dollar GDP overstates real growth rates because it does not account for inflation. Using constant dollars, Tourism GDP rose 22.7% between 1989 and 1998. Using constant dollars, Tourism growth since 1989 has outpaced Agriculture, which rose 17.7%, Forestry, down 25.7% and Fishing down 46.5%. Using constant dollar GDP, Tourism GDP has grown from 56.1% of Forestry GDP in 1989 to 92.7% in 1998.

2.5 Tourism: The Importer of the Exporting Sector

Whereas traditional export industries ship commodities to markets in other countries, in tourism the consumers (markets) travel to British Columbia to purchase the product — *Super Natural* British Columbia. In 1999, $4.0 billion of BC's tourism revenue was earned in foreign exchange. This was an increase of 8.2% over 1998 and a 35.5% increase since 1995.

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[6] Research Services, Tourism British Columbia, February 2001

Last year, tourism was the second-largest earner of export income in the provincial economy, after wood products. Tourism earned more export income than machinery and equipment, metallic minerals, agriculture and food, and fish products.

2.6 Tourism and Rural Job Creation

Clearly, tourism is a prime growth engine for rural British Columbia because it can create new and relatively stable long-term jobs for local residents[7]. This is significant considering that most North American tourism destinations have enjoyed stable or expanding markets for several decades, at a time when primary resource industries have experienced cyclical, and too often permanent, downturns in jobs. Tourism jobs are readily accessible to local residents, as they often require a familiarity with the region. Many tourism jobs are seasonal, which can be a disadvantage for those seeking full-time work. (Although as BC's tourism industry matures and diversifies its products, many locations and businesses are becoming multi-seasonal.) On the other hand, seasonal and part-time work can be well suited to people who do not want full-time work, such as students and working parents. Tourism is particularly important as a generator of youth, entry-level jobs. As well, the expanding tourism market offers opportunities for career advancement into supervisory and managerial positions for many young people.

In addition, it is worth noting that the vast majority of tourism businesses in British Columbia are managed and operated by independent owner-operators. Approximately 90% of all tourism businesses consist of one or two owners and less than five staff. Therefore, the opportunity to develop and run your own business is one of the great benefits of the industry. Along with this owner-operator structure comes the added bonus of determining one's own unique lifestyle — a benefit that owner-operators are very quick to state as their main incentive in getting into the business.

2.7 Tourism and Regional Economic Development

Tourism is important to the economic diversification and health of many rural BC communities. Unlike other land-based industries, tourism imports the market to the product, rather than export the product out of region to distant markets. As such tourism serves as a vital element in the trade within local and regional economies. Tourism is the only industry with a positive net flow of funds from wealthier to poorer regions, and from urban to rural communities. Because of the nature of the tourism sector, the majority of the money spent is imported from other geographic regions, and is new to the host community. As a result studies show that tourism revenue can result in a five to seven times multiplier effect in local communities[8].

Tourism in rural areas also acts as a 'recruiting' device, attracting new permanent residents and businesses to an area. Hence, tourism can be an important element in revitalizing the local economy by putting the spotlight on the community and emphasizing its attractive features. Tourism expenditures also support construction, public administration, professional, and medical and educational services; none of which are low paying. Tourism also provides exceptional lifestyle and entrepreneurial opportunities. In fact, tourism has the highest owner/operator ratio of any sector in British Columbia. The number of tourism-related businesses in BC grew over 50% in 6 years, from less than 10,000 in 1990, to more than 15,700 in 1996. In places like Tofino, Whistler, the Okanagan Valley, Invermere and Nelson, tourism is the leading sector of the economy.

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[7] Cited in: Jobs and Environment — Moving British Columbia into the 21st Century, BC Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks, 1999.

[8] Shoaf, W. "Sundance". Article for Business Coalition for Sustainable Cities, at ttp//www.earthpledge.org/progress/wpapers/wpsundan.html

2.8 Ecotourism and Activity Trends

Ecotourism is that component of the tourism industry that focuses on the experiencing of natural or indigenous culture in a way that minimizes impacts. Ecotourism appeals to a global market, particularly well-educated, affluent, urban residents from developed countries. BC's high quality and diverse natural scenery offer the competitive conditions for the province's expanding eco-adventure tourism sector.

Tourism BC estimates the value of ecotourism to be $350 million annually[9]. Significant as this is, as important is the fact that BC rates as a top adventure tourism destination in North America[10]. Ecotourism is the fastest growing segment of the BC tourism sector. Furthermore, the opportunities for expansion of BC's ecotourism sector are substantial. This is important given that one-half of U.S. adults – or 98 million persons – took an adventure vacation within the past five years. A recent national survey of the ecotourism and adventure tourism sector in Canada concluded that *"Canada's natural environment, encompassing vast unspoiled wilderness areas and spectacular scenery is ideally suited to the development of adventure travel and ecotourism and is already the basis of an internationally competitive product base"*[11].

2.8.1 The Evolving Adventure/Ecotourism Experience

The outdoor adventure/ecotourism market is expanding, but it is also changing in substantive ways. The outdoor adventure experience encompasses four major characteristics: (a) involvement with a natural environment, (b) elements of risk and danger, (c) uncertain outcome, and (d) influenced by the participant or circumstance (Exhibit 1). These components serve to separate adventure recreation from other forms of recreational activities. The adventure experience can also vary along a number of dimensions including type of travel, group membership, and/or amount and spectrum of risk. This variance is illustrated in the preceding figure. The adventure travel industry uses potential risk as a parameter in categorizing adventure activities into hard or soft activities. Most operators are now familiar with this terminology but have to be increasingly aware of further fracturing and the implications this will have for both product and market development.

2.8.2 Access and Opportunities

Access and opportunity is paramount to adventure recreation and since the bulk of the land base is Crown land, provincial land managers usually determine these. Allowable activities, acceptable practices and facilities are the three main parameters determining what activity occurs and where. Adventure activities are increasingly seen as a legitimate use of Crown lands but it has only been in the very recent past that multiple-use concepts have even been mentioned in the policy framework. The industry, and communities which rely on the related economic benefits, have to ensure that adventure tourism interests have a rightful place within the land and resource management regime.

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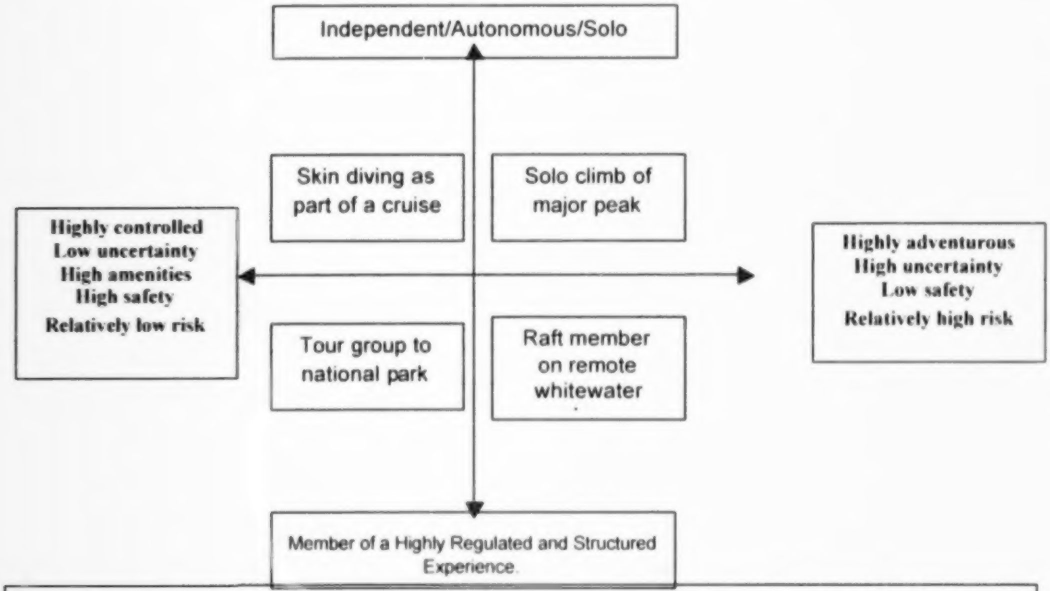
[9] Tourism BC.

[10] Travel Industry Association of America. January 1998. The Adventure Travel Report, 1997.

[11] Canadian Tourism Commission

Exhibit 1: The Adventure Tourism Experience


Independent/Autonomous/Solo
Skin diving as part of a cruise
Solo climb of major peak
Highly controlled
Low uncertainty
High amenities
High safety
Relatively low risk
Highly adventurous
High uncertainty
Low safety
Relatively high risk
Tour group to national park
Raft member on remote whitewater
Member of a Highly Regulated and Structured Experience

Source: Trends in Outdoor Recreation: Programs, Experiences and Issues, Alan W. Ewert, Indiana University, 2000

2.8.3 Technology

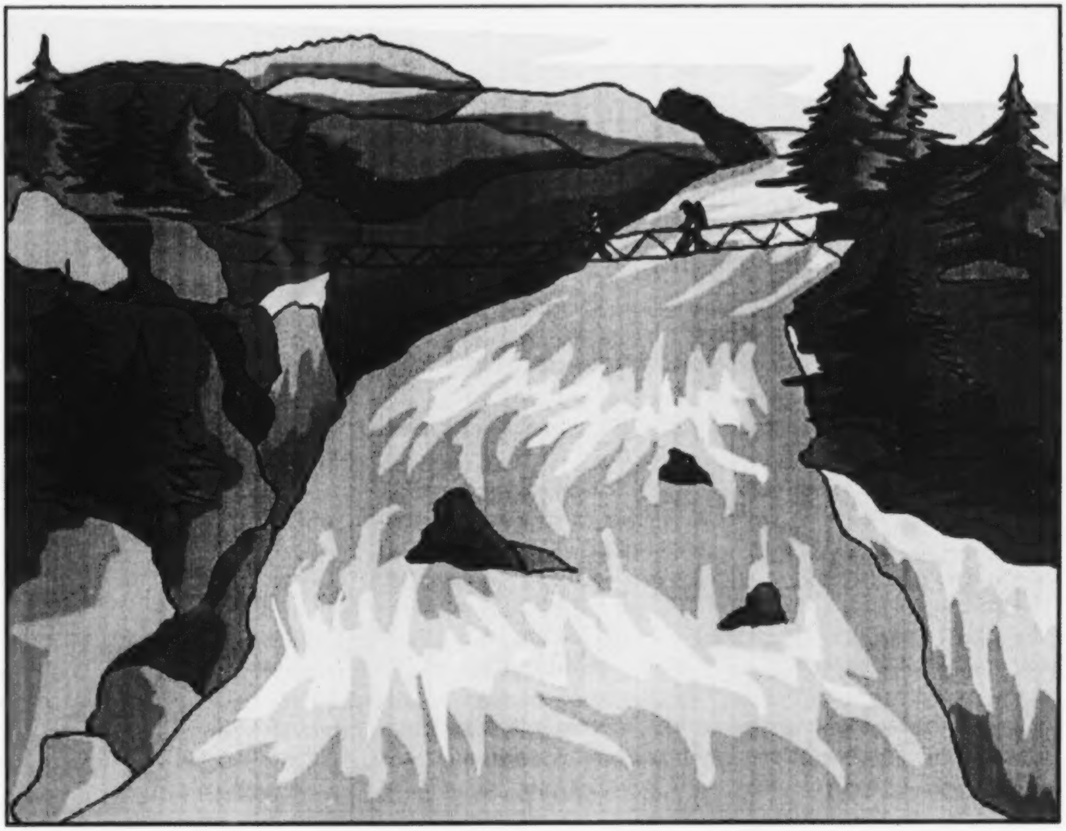
In general, technological innovations, whether equipment or clothing-oriented, impact the adventure recreation experience in five ways: access/transportation, comfort, safety, communication, and information. This has enabled lesser skilled participants to participate in activities at the more extreme end of the spectrum. In the end, this will continue to increase participation and open up new opportunities for business and market development.

2.8.4 Societal Acceptance

A number of emerging trends suggest that outdoor adventure recreation is becoming much more accepted by the public than has previously been the case. Coverage by the mass media, the growth of adventure programs for therapeutic intent and the growth of training programs that incorporate adventure activities are some examples of how pervasive outdoor activities have become. This will not only increase participation, demand and business opportunities, but place tremendous pressure on land managers to actively manage for tourism values when this has not occurred in the past.

2.8.5 Implications for Tourism Development in the Study Area

Future tourism growth in Canada and British Columbia will be driven by interest in outdoor experiences, particularly those in the soft adventure market and ecotourism. The Kispiox region has many of the attributes needed to appeal to these markets but development will depend on key responses. Operators must understand the risk-reward relationship and provide the features and amenities which have the strongest appeal for local travel markets, which tend to be in the soft adventure category. They must incorporate technology and innovation so as to broaden market appeal for activities in demand, and improve their own competitiveness. They must seek greater cooperation with land managers and communities to ensure the Crown land base recognizes the demands and needs of tourism as a legitimate resource user. Communities must play a more prominent role by furnishing infrastructure and support services that underpin the industry and the employment and regional income benefits it can bring to local residents.



Chapter 3

3 Kispiox Forest District

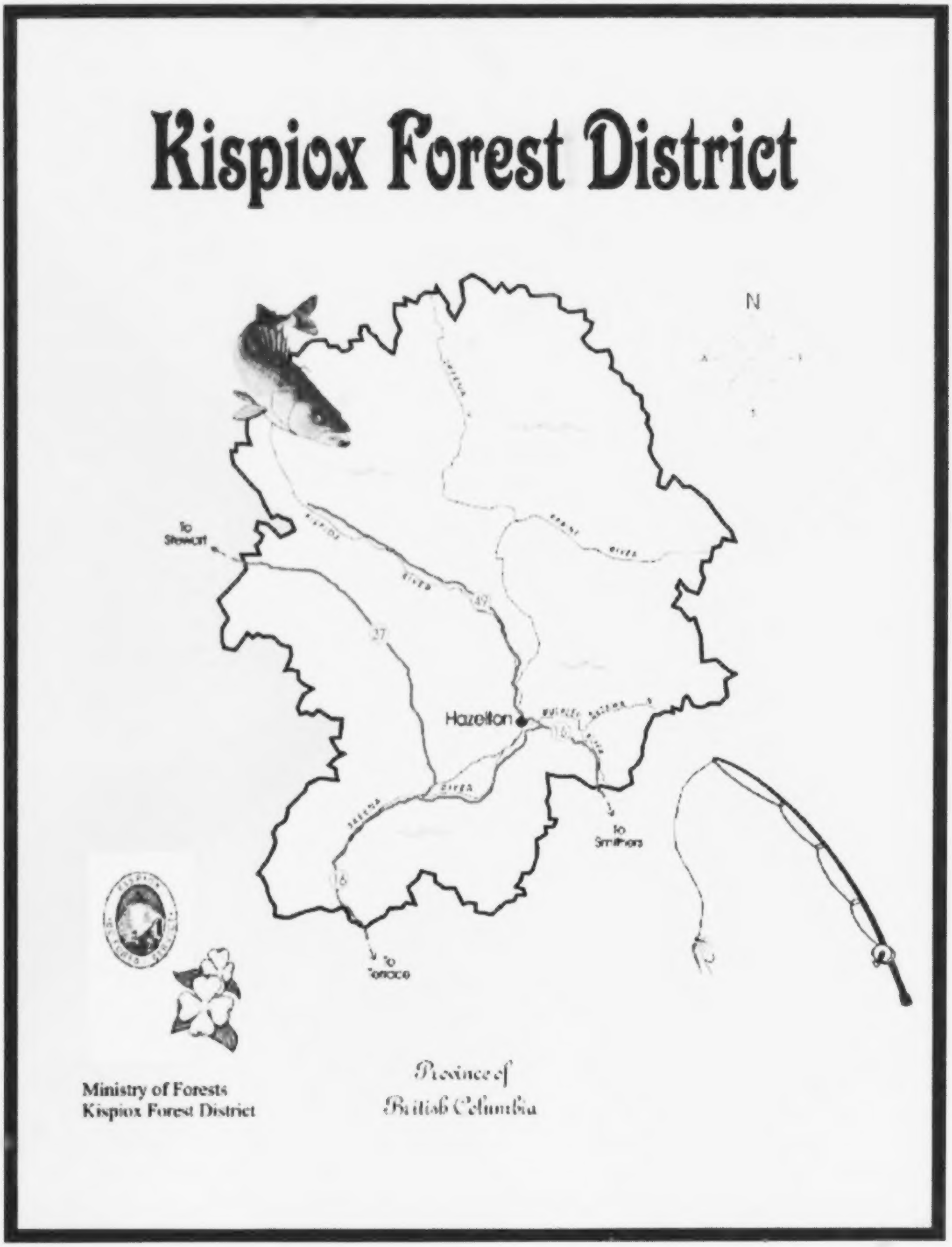
3.1 Introduction

The Kispiox Forest District (Exhibit 2) – which is a very accessible tourism destination – is in a prime area of BC for tourism development. The area has magnificent scenic resources with abundant natural and pristine wilderness areas. The region has diverse opportunities for mountain and river recreation, camping, wildlife viewing, and a range of other tourism and recreation activities. These resources are supported by a range of attractions, parks, and facilities which can cater to tourism and recreational needs. However, tourism products targeted at the outdoor, adventure, culture and heritage tourism markets do not at present meet market demands. The opportunity to better capture this market through product development, enhanced tourism services and marketing is strong.

Enhanced tourism development offers regions such as the Kispiox/Gitxsan area – where traditional resource dependant industries are experiencing a decline due to automation, soft markets and/or decreasing resource supply – yet one more opportunity to further diversify its economy. Tourism is a resource based industry which is experiencing substantial growth. The 1995/96 BC visitor survey conducted by the Ministry of Small Business Tourism and Culture indicates that travelers are staying longer and spending more money when they travel within BC. Another key finding of the survey is that travelers are visiting more regions within BC. For the study area this means that more visitors are coming to the area. This increased tourism activity within the region translates into economic opportunities for the region. However, in order to fully benefit from this increase in tourism activity, tourism development must occur to provide the visitor with things to do while visiting the region. This in turn will encourage the visitor to stay longer within the region, resulting in an increase in tourism revenue. The benefits of enhanced tourism development in the Study area will be realized through increased employment opportunities in the region, and a higher level of entrepreneurial and income-generating opportunities.

The study area, with it's attractive natural features, is in a prime position to benefit from this market surge. However, this will require well-designed and executed product development.

Exhibit 2: Kispiox Forest District


Kispiox Forest District
N
To Stewart
Kispiox River
Babine River
37
27
Hazelton
Bulkley River
16
Skeena River
16
To Smithers
To Terrace
Ministry of Forests
Kispiox Forest District
Province of
British Columbia

3.2 Land Base

The Kispiox Forest District (FD), covering 1.2 million hectares, is one of seven Forest Districts in the Prince Rupert Forest Region. The Skeena, Kispiox and Bulkley Rivers traverse the area. The Kispiox Valley lies at the central portion of the Kispiox district and contains the communities of Hazelton and New Hazelton (combined estimated population of 1,187 in 1995). The Upper Kispiox planning area and Seven Sisters Park lie in the northwest and southwest portions of the FD, respectively. Together, the areas account for approximately 7.8 percent of the total FD land base, 50,177 hectares for the Upper Kispiox and 46,230 hectares for the Seven Sisters. In terms of the timber harvesting land base, the combined areas account for 6.3 percent of the total.

3.3 Community Profile

The Kispiox TSA's population is about 3,526. All of the population growth in the district during the 1986 to 1991 period (as well as the vast majority since 1991) occurred in Subdivision B of the Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine (RDKS).

The average age of the local population has historically been lower than the provincial average, typical of resource-based communities where young families with children are prevalent. The workforce in the Kispiox has a lower level of education than the BC workforce. The average Kitimat-Stikine income has remained close to the BC average income during this period.

Forestry, manufacturing, transportation and the education service sector are all important economic base sectors in the local economy. The forest industry is the most important in the Kispiox TSA.

Community services in the Kispiox TSA are offered through the major communities in the Hazeltons as well as through the First Nations organizations and smaller settlements. The Wrinch Memorial Hospital is located in Hazelton. Law enforcement is administered by the local RCMP detachment in New Hazelton, which patrols Highway 16 from Moricetown to Cedarvale and Highway 37 from Kitwanga to the Cranberry River. Economic development initiatives are actively pursued in the region by local, provincial and federal agencies and commissions.

The Kispiox TSA has high quality outdoor recreational opportunities. Activities include fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, hiking, camping, kayaking, canoeing, rafting, cross-country and downhill skiing, snowmobiling, horseback trail riding, and mountaineering. There are eight provincial protected areas in the TSA: Seeley Lake, Ross Lake[12], Swan Lake/Kispiox River, Bulkley Junction, Kitwanga Mountain, Babine River Corridor, Seven Sisters Provincial Park & Protected Area and the Catherine Creek Ecological Reserve. The fishery in the TSA is important to local communities both in terms of recreation and tourism.

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[12] While the Ross Lake Provincial Park day-use area has been designated for closure as a result of the BC government CORE review, the community of New Hazelton has recently agreed to undertake the ongoing operation and maintenance of the area

3.4 Economic Base

The Kispiox TSA covers a total area of 1,222,624 hectares with the timber harvesting land base accounting for 317,939 hectares. The Chief Forester established the current AAC of 1,100,000 m3 in 1996. It is apportioned to five replaceable forest licences: Repap (576,815 m3), Bell Pole Company Ltd. (55,414 m3), Hobenshield Brothers (13 680 m3), Kitwanga Lumber (77,852 m3) and Kispiox Forest Products Ltd. (64,124 m3). Two replaceable timber sale licenses account for 17 034 m3, while the Small Business Forest Enterprise Program takes 247,596 m3. The remaining 37,445 m3 is in woodlot licenses or the Forest Service Reserve. In addition to licensees, there are a number of other companies involved in the Kispiox TSA timber harvest. Up to 12 logging companies operate in the Kispiox TSA.

A total of 664 PYs of direct and indirect employment and $20.71 million in income is generated by forestry within the TSA. For the province as a whole, 1,848 direct and indirect PYs of employment and $52.61 million in income is generated.

Currently there are no mines operating or mining exploration in the area, although the area has seen activity when prices were higher. The Seven Sisters is believed to have some good mineral potential. The TSA has not been extensively explored for oil and gas, but the potential for hydrocarbons is believed to be moderate to good in the Upper Kispiox. No active oil and gas tenures are found within the planning area. No potential for geothermal energy exists in the planning area.

The Skeena system is the major watershed into which all major Kispiox rivers flow, with the exception the Cranberry. The Skeena and Kispiox systems provide habitat for five salmon species. The Babine River is the largest producer of sockeye salmon and steelhead trout in the Skeena drainage and next to the Fraser River system, the sockeye salmon population in the Skeena system is the largest in the province. There are believed to be numerous distinct salmon stocks within the district.

Recreational fishing brings in five times the revenue per fish than commercial fishing does and has increased by two to three percent provincially per year over the past three years.

Commercial harvesting of pine mushrooms is a major use of botanical forest products in the Kispiox TSA. In 1994, 160,000 Kg of pine mushrooms were harvested and pickers were paid $3.9 million in the Nass River valley including the area around Cranberry Junction (Meyer Resources 1995). It is estimated that $2.5 million was spent in value added activities related to the trade of mushrooms such as shipping and processing.

Most of the farming in the Kispiox TSA occurs within the Kitimat-Stikine Subdivision B area. Agricultural activities are focused on beef cattle and forage production. Use of range resources on Crown land in the Kispiox planning area is low. Approximately 1,000 of the available 5,000 animal unit months (AUMs) of grazing on Crown land are used each year. Nine range units are located in the Skeena River and Kispiox River valleys. Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) has been designated along the Kispiox, Skeena, Bulkley and Suskwa river valleys.

The Kispiox TSA's number of active trappers is not readily available nor is the breakdown between aboriginal and non-aboriginal trappers. Trapping within the TSA has been a traditional activity for local residents for many years and has important cultural significance.

The Kispiox TSA has a significant public sector employment and income base. After the forest industry, the public sector is the next most important in terms of contributions to employment and employment income.

3.5 Outdoor Recreation

Outdoor recreation activities in the region include fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, hiking, camping, kayaking, canoeing, rafting, cross-country and downhill skiing, snowmobiling, horseback trail riding, and mountaineering. Several areas in the TSA possess high quality wilderness recreation opportunities and attract visitors from the US and overseas.

The region's mountains, and their well-established network of trails provide fine opportunities for rock climbing, ice climbing, hiking, horseback riding and hunting enthusiasts. The rivers, in addition to providing angling experiences, also offer excellent kayaking, canoeing and rafting opportunities. Activities such as snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, and hiking are dispersed throughout the TSA.

Presently, there are eight provincial parks, twelve Forest Service Recreation Sites[13] and many hiking trails in the Kispiox TSA. Wildlife viewing, as well as hunting and fishing, have benefited in the short-term from timber harvesting because of the increase in access roads. In the longer term, this increased access may also have an adverse impact on wildlife populations.

The Ministry of Forests manages recreation sites on the Suskwa, Upper Kispiox and Sweetin Rivers, on Sedan Creek and on Little Fish, Mitten, Keyton, Pentz, Watson, Elizabeth, Octopus, Bonus and Derrick Lakes. Established BC Forest Services recreation trails include Blue Lakes, Station Creek, Sidina Mountain, Thomlinson Mountain, Kispiox Mountain, Coyote Creek, Thoen Mountain and Old Kuldo Interpretive Trail. Trails located in the Seven Sisters area are now the responsibility of BC Parks.

Other existing trails in the study area – not maintained by the Forest Service – include: Kitwanga Mountain, Nine Mile Mountain, Comeau Creek, Chicago Creek, Insect Lookout, Boulder Creek, Oliver Creek, Cedarvale, Whiskey Creek, Watson Lake & Telegraph Trail.

The results of a recent recreation inventory study are summarized in Exhibit 3, which clearly addresses those geographic areas within the Kispiox Forest District that can be considered 'prime' recreation and adventure tourism operating areas. Issues as they pertain to each geographic area are also discussed.

Immediately following Exhibit 3 is a summary chart showing fish species and a summary of the major rivers found within the Kispiox Forest District (Exhibit 4).

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[13] As of the completion of this report, the ongoing status of Forest Recreation Sites is unknown. Most likely, all sites presently administered by the Ministry of Forests will be closed and facilities removed.

Exhibit 3: Geographic Areas of Tourism & Recreation Use — Kispiox Forest District[14]

AREA OF KISPIOX FD	EXISTING USE	COMMENTS AND ISSUES
Kispiox Range	An existing trail (Moonlit trail) starts up a ridge near the Date Creek Research Forest and reaches the summit ridge of the Kispiox Range. Hikers, ATVers, horseback riders, snowmobilers, skiers and a local Guide Outfitter heavily use this trail. The Kispiox Range Traverse offers a multi-day back packing opportunity from the north end of the range near Kitwanga Lake to the south end on Hazelton Peak. It seems likely use on this traverse is quite low at present but with significant opportunity for growth in the future. The open slopes on the south end of the range have had some ski touring take place recently and may gain more popularity in the future.	The most commonly used access/egress at the south end of the Kispiox traverse requires crossing private land. It would be useful to establish a public access route, perhaps off the Burdick Creek Forest road. The southern part of the traverse covers some exposed ridges which require some mountaineering experience. Some hazard exists for the inexperienced, those ill prepared and those encountering poor weather conditions. Any information provided to potential users must make these points clear. The Moonlit trail is being damaged by ATV use and from reading the inventory report it doesn't sound particularly suitable for motorized use because of high moisture content in soils which makes them easily damaged.
Thomlinson / Sidina Range	Old mining trails exist up both Mt Thomlinson and Sidina Mountain. Maintenance on these trails in 1998 may increase use levels which appear to be fairly low currently. The Thomlinson trail may be suitable for both snowmobile and ATV use while both trails are suitable for hiking, horseback riding and ski touring. Old trails, reportedly 1st nation's trails, exist up both Sediesh and Shewiliba creeks to the headwaters. Use levels on these trails are unknown but likely low.	Nobody interviewed mentioned any particular concerns with these trails or the area in general.
	Two hiking trails from the Blunt Forest road in the Bulkley TSA offer access to Mt Seaton and the Seaton basin from the east. There is some summer mountaineering use which may extend into the Kispiox District but most of the use which reaches into the Kispiox is ski touring and snowmobiling use in the winter. A hiking trail reaches Thoen Basin from the Suskwa Forest road but it reportedly gets low use at present. An old mining road reaches a subalpine valley on the north side of Netalzal peak but none of our interviews identified any use in this area. A trail also exists up French Peak from the Bulkley TSA. It likely has little effect on use in the Kispiox District. Snowmobilers are currently accessing French peak and the Thoen trail. Many travel by trail from Hazelton via the old Hazelton to the historic Babine trading trail up the Suskwa valley, although the level of use is not well known. ATVers use this trail in the summer and again, the level of use is not well known.	The most heavily used access is from the Blunt FSR in the Bulkley TSA. There is an unresolved conflict between motorized and human-powered winter recreationists in this area. One suggested resolution was to schedule alternating winters for the two types of use, but this has not be adopted as of March 2000.
Kitseguecla / Kitsums	Uses documented during the public process revolve mainly around the rivers. A limited amount of Kayaking is occurring on the north branch of the Kitsun from the point where the forest road crosses three creeks which all come together at the same place, down to the lower Kitseguecla River bridge. The reach between the lower bridge and the confluence is also kayaked and sometimes canoed. The river is an important salmon bearing water and is also fished. There is mushroom picking as well in the valley. Alpine areas are not easily accessible	Concern was expressed regarding possible negative effects of road access into any areas around the back of The Seven Sisters park area.

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[14] Sourced from: Recreation Features Inventory & Recreation Opportunities Spectrum for the Kispiox Forest District. Hillcrest Recreation Consulting Inc., March 2000.

AREA OF KISPIOX FD	EXISTING USE	COMMENTS AND ISSUES
	at present with the exception of Ashman ridge which is accessed via a trail from the Mulwain road in the Bulkley TSA. Some of the alpine area east of the 7 Sisters park is attractive for hikers and may be used if/when harvesting gets closer to treeline.	
Skeena West	Trails exist up Kitwanga Peak, Sedan Creek, Wilson Creek and to the Insect Creek Lookout. The Wilson Creek/Dobe trail is reported to be an ancient 1st Nations trail, it has a small campsite on a lake surrounded by subalpine forest near treeline and was once part of a route to the head of Kalum Lake according to Fred Philpot. Residents of Kitwanga reportedly constructed the Kitwanga Peak trail within the last few decades. It has had no maintenance recently and is apparently difficult to locate in a number of places. Local people report that neither one of these trails appears to be getting very much use at present. The Sedan Creek trail leads to a small Forest Service picnic area and does get some summer use. Hikers, ATVers horseback riders and snowmobilers use the Insect Lookout trail. The Lookout has been repaired by locals and is suitable for overnight use. Local residents use Forest roads accessed off the Cedarvale back road for ATV and snowmobile riding but likely do not attract use from other areas. Terrace snowmobilers have accessed an attractive alpine area at the head of Lorne Creek via a forest road up Douglas Creek near the north end of Kalum Lake. They have applied for a permit to build a cabin. This application is being evaluated now (March 2000), some concern exists regarding the need to cross an active avalanche bowl to reach the cabin site. Seven Sisters Ventures has an approved permit to develop hiking trails and huts over much of this area from BC Lands and Assets. They have also negotiated an agreement with the Gitxsan. Apparently a lack of funding is holding up this project at present.	If the Seven Sisters Ventures project proceeds there will be a significant concern regarding timber harvesting in the area, particularly as to how it may affect the visual landscape. Another concern may lie with the possibility of motorized access to alpine areas which could become possible from the west as Kalum forest road reach closer to treeline. A large alpine/subalpine plateau and ridge system exists in the headwaters of Insect Creek. This area will be very attractive to snowmobilers and ski tourers once forest development makes it more accessible. It appears at present that the road up Stenstrom Creek in the Kalum District may provide access in the future. There is some potential for conflict between skiers and snowmobilers in this area as it is very attractive.
	Interviews during this project indicated that the only significant recreation use in this area is mushroom picking. Although a number of people mentioned how scenic the upper Weber Creek and Cranberry forest roads were	The northern end of these ranges including ridge systems above the Kiteen and the Mt Weber area are composed of many rounded alpine ridges with numerous small tarns and would likely be very attractive to hikers and backpackers. One of the attractions of this area is the undisturbed nature of many of the small valleys, the recreation value of this area would definitely remain higher if these valleys are not logged.
River Use	Rafting and Kayaking are among the fastest growing sports in British Columbia with use increasing by more than three times since 1990 (BC Parks household survey 1998). The most popular rivers for these activities include the Suskwa, the Babine from the Suskwa to 'Ksan, the Kispiox from the rodeo grounds to the Skeena and the Skeena from the Babine confluence to Ksan. Other areas which receive significant and growing use include: The upper Skeena and Sicintine rivers, the Skeena from Ksan to Kitwanga, and the Kitseguecla and Kitsuns rivers. The Skeena below Kitwanga is also a beautiful river with a high potential for rafting or kayak/canoe use in the future. Rivers that appear to have potential for Kayak use include the Shelagyote and Shedin. Some canoeing exists, as well as jet boating and jet skiing but these seem to be relatively minor activities at present. They do occur on many area rivers. Extensive fishing for salmon, steelhead and trout exists on rivers and lakes throughout the	There are three significant issues related to river use: motorized versus human-powered recreation; access; and visual landscape management. Rafters and kayakers, particularly those involved in commercial recreation ventures are depending to a great extent on the pristine nature of their trip. Because of this jet boat use and timber harvesting can both have significant impacts on their business. A number of people interviewed commented that visible harvesting activities along the upper Kispiox and the Babine/Skeena systems were viewed negatively. Timber harvesting visual impacts are currently

AREA OF KISPIOX FD	EXISTING USE	COMMENTS AND ISSUES
	district and has been noted on the inventory where information was obtained. Fishing information, like information regarding mushroom picking locations, is not something which is typically divulged to people gathering information for reports such as this, so much of the information is quite general.	important on the lower Bulkley, the whole of the Skeena and the Sicintine Rivers. In the future they could become important on the Shedin and Shelagyote Rivers. Currently, Jet boat use is of greatest concern (to commercial rafting & Kayaking companies), on the portion of the Bulkley River between the Suskwa confluence and Ksan and on the Babine River. Access is an important concern for all river users, much current access is via private property or across reserve lands. As use continues to grow these access points may no longer be available which could create problems for river users. A suggestion was made that the Ministry of Forests review the possibility of setting up cooperative agreements for maintenance at some of the more heavily used access points.
Recreation Close to Urban Areas	A considerable amount of recreation occurs close to urban areas. In the Hazeltons this includes walking, running, mountain biking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, ATV use and snowmobile use on trails and skid roads close to the communities. Climbing occurs close to the Hagwilget Bridge and near the 4-mile bridge on the Kispiox Valley road. As well as the trails directly adjacent to the Hazeltons there are several close by in the Rocher Desboule Range and at Moonlit Creek. The Roads up 9 Mile Mountain and Comeau Creek are popular for sightseeing, picnicking, ATV use, Snowmobile use and ski touring, as well as locations for Hang gliding launches. Fishing is popular on the local rivers as well. The forest recreation site at Bell (Keynton) lake is popular for swimming, fishing, and jet boat skiing. In the Kitwanga area there are also local skid roads used for many of the same purposes as well as an annual archery tournament which attracts people from across the province. Kitwanga Lake, a short drive north of the community attracts considerable summer use for boating and fishing as well as camping.	Many local trails cross private land as well as crown land and access depends on the good will of the land owner. There is also some potential for conflict between motorized and human powered users, both in summer and in winter. Kitwanga residents indicated they would like to see recreation sites suitable for camping/water use near their community, particularly at Kitwanga Lake.

Exhibit 4: Stream Summary Information for Major Streams in the Kispiox Forest District

STREAM	FISH DISTRIBUTION	FISHERIES ISSUES	OTHER USE ISSUES
Skeena River	Sockeye, coho, pink, chinook, steelhead, burbot, cutthroat trout, Dolly Varden, kokanee, lake trout, lake whitefish, Rocky Mountain whitefish, rainbow trout.	Heavy sport and native fishery.	Information available for main tributaries only.
Bulkley River	Sockeye, coho, pink, chum, steelhead, burbot, cutthroat trout, Dolly Varden, lake trout, lake, whitefish, Rocky Mountain whitefish, rainbow trout.	Heavy sport and native food fishery; upper section frequently changes course, very heavy beaver activity; spawning occurs throughout.	Acid mine drainage problems (Equity Silver); transmission line development impact; concerns regarding Telkwa Coal Mine development (upriver of study area).
Babine River	Sockeye, coho, pink, chum, chinook steelhead, burbot, cutthroat trout, Dolly Varden, kokanee, lake trout, Rocky Mountain whitefish, rainbow trout.	Heavy sport and first nation fishery.	
Kitseguecla	Sockeye, coho, pink, chum, chinook, steelhead, cutthroat trout, Dolly Varden, Rocky Mountain, whitefish, rainbow, trout.	Subject to scouring and erosion in most years: glacier stream: swift flowing: bouldering: poor salmon producer.	Sawmill operating near river.
Kitwanga River	sockeye, coho, pink, chum, chinook	Native food fishery.	No information available.
Kispiox River	sockeye, coho, pink, chum, chinook steelhead, burbot, cutthroat trout, Dolly Varden, kokanee, rainbow trout.	World class steelhead fishery.	No information available.

Source: Department of Fisheries and Oceans

3.6 Outdoor Recreation Issues in the Kispiox Forest District

3.6.1 Access to the Atna/Shelagyote Special Management Zone

There has been very limited access to this area in the past. At this point the spectacular scenery and high numbers of wildlife exist in a relatively pristine condition. Timber harvesting and associated roads in the Shedin, Shelagyote and Sicintine Valleys as well as Tommy Jack Pass will soon increase access to this area significantly. Increased recreation use will have the potential to negatively affect both the wildlife and environmental values of the area.

3.6.2 ATV use

There have been no reported conflicts between ATV users and other recreationists. There has been some environmental damage reportedly caused by ATV use. Areas where damage has been reported include; the south end of the Atna Range, The Moonlit trail, Nine Mile Mountain, the Oliver Creek trail in the Seven Sisters and the alpine area at the end of the Boulder Creek trail in the Rocher Deboule Range. Wet subalpine areas in and near Tommy Jack Pass have a high potential to be negatively affected by ATV use when the new forestry road is completed in that area. Areas around the Rocher Deboule and Red Rose mines may be damaged by ATV use if the access road up Juniper Creek is re opened. There is strong feeling about ATV use in alpine areas. ATV users believe they should have access and many others do not believe ATV use should be allowed above treeline.

3.6.3 Snowmobile use

There have been no reported conflicts between Snowmobile users and other recreationists. Concern was expressed regarding negative impacts on wildlife caused by snowmobile use. Issues included disturbance of wildlife on winter range, poaching/hunting by snowmobile, and wolf use of snowmobile tracks for travel and hunting. One major northern adventure tourism operator feels the following wildlife areas have the potential to be negatively affected by snowmobiling: ungulate wintering areas on the north side of the Babine River and the Gail Creek area, the Shelagyote wetlands, the Tommy Jack Pass area and all valleys on the west side of the Atna Range. One person raised the issue of changing alpine plant communities caused by late snow melt where heavy snow machine use has caused snow compaction.

3.6.4 Access to Rivers

River users, particularly kayakers, canoeists and rafters are concerned that many commonly used access points are either unprotected from the impacts of development, or on private land or Indian reserve land. As river use grows and development occurs along the rivers some of these access points may become unavailable. Related concerns were expressed that too much access might be developed in the future. Many users felt that fishing and boat traffic on area rivers is high enough now and does not need to be expanded. Concern was also expressed regarding maintenance and garbage pickup at highly used access points.

3.6.5 River Viewscapes

There was a consensus among people interviewed that the quality of tourism and recreation on area rivers was highly dependent on the visual landscape as seen from the river. The less the visual landscape has been modified by timber harvesting, road construction or other development, the more desirable it is in terms of tourism and recreation. Several people questioned whether visual landscape objectives for the Skeena River were being met in the vicinity of the Skeena/Babine junction.

3.6.6 Motorized use of the Bulkley Canyon

At the present time the Bulkley Canyon from the Suskwa confluence to 'Ksan is heavily used by commercial rafters and by recreational kayakers. There is low motorized use because of rapids but potential does exist for jet boat use on this part of the river. The commercial rafting company and kayakers would like to see this portion of the river declared Non-motorized both for safety reasons and because motorized use would detract from their experience on the river.

3.6.7 Recreation site at Kitwancool Lake

There is reported high use of informal camping areas along the east side of Kitwancool Lake. The lake and shoreland areas are used for camping, picnicking, boating, swimming, fishing, ice fishing and duck hunting. Local people would like to see a safe, maintained site there. Members of the Kitwanga Community Association felt that people would be willing to pay to use such a site.

3.7 Upper Kispiox & Seven Sisters Planning Areas

Protecting the Upper Kispiox and Seven Sisters planning areas would impact the tourism sector in several ways, but those operations, which depend on the natural resource features of the land base, would be most closely affected. The following is a qualitative assessment of the Status Quo:

3.7.1 Impacts on Tourism Resources

In the event of protection[15], the tourism impacts would be different for the Upper Kispiox and Seven Sisters planning areas because of contrasting locational factors and tourism attributes, as well as an anticipated difference in the future scale of tourism development.

The LRMP, which applies to the Status Quo as well as all three scenarios, does recognize tourism values in the TSA. Several management objectives and strategies in the LRMP, including biodiversity, fisheries, wildlife and scenic areas, will positively impact key natural resources on which much of the back-country and wilderness adventure products depend. However, government agency management planning also closely influences tourism development prospects and it is unclear at this point what management directions would allow or not allow in terms of tourism development. As stated in the *Resource and Recreation Use Guidelines for Protected Areas* [1995], tourism activities and developments are allowed "subject to the Management Plan", but as it is not clear what these management plans would look like, it is also not clear whether protected area designation for the Upper Kispiox or the Seven Sisters would enhance tourism activity in the short-term. In the long-term, irrespective of government planning, protection for both areas would benefit tourism activity in the Kispiox.

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[15] Since this study was initiated, both the Upper Kispiox & Seven Sisters have received protected area status.

In the Upper Kispiox, a conservation emphasis would be expected to prevail because of concerns regarding fish and grizzly bear habitat. Limited access and the distance from major highways and populated areas suggest that tourism activity within the Upper Kispiox would be negligible. However, as described earlier, there is a significant sport fishery and some wilderness adventure activity around the Hazeltons - protection would strengthen important tourism attributes such as the existence of trophy-sized steelhead, sustainable wildlife populations and wilderness areas which support these businesses.

In the Seven Sisters, as in the Upper Kispiox, protection would have the same positive influence on tourism attributes. But there are reasons to believe that the exceptional tourism attributes of the Seven Sisters (viewscapes, terrain variations, close proximity to highways 16-37) in combination with road access and existing recreation use, if protected, could generate some significant tourism employment and employment income activity in the long-term.

3.7.2 Impacts on Tourism Sectors

3.7.2.1 UPPER KISPIOX

Protection for the Upper Kispiox would benefit the wilderness adventure and especially the fishing lodge and guiding sector in the long-term. As healthy fish populations are critical for this sector and as it is the prime income earner for the Kispiox tourism industry, the importance of productive and sustainable fish habitat cannot be overstated. The creation of a protected area in the Upper Kispiox would likely attract and encourage longer stays in the region by tourists and would protect opportunities for growth in sustainable tourism. This, in turn, would generate employment and employment income benefits. In addition, there may be a stimulation of additional investments in commercial backcountry activities (e.g. a new lodge) either in or adjacent to the area. Data is not available at this time to estimate these impacts.

3.7.2.2 SEVEN SISTERS

The tourism impacts of protecting the Seven Sisters could be very positive because exceptional tourism attributes, convenient road access, existing recreation use and close proximity to Highway 16 and major regional population centres such as Terrace and Smithers form a development core that could easily attract more tourism markets and investment capital. How development might evolve with protection would be closely influenced by a number of factors, including the following:

- Limits on scale and nature of investments and activities imposed by management policies in the Seven Sisters;
- The quality of the tourism resource in the surrounding areas;
- The marketing, service, and product development skills of tourism operators; and,

- International, national and regional tourism trends.

Based on our conversations with area stakeholders, protection would stimulate several activities along with tourism jobs and income, including the following:

- unguided frontcountry hiking (adjacent to Highway 16);
- long distance backcountry hiking;
- summer mountaineering;
- guided ecological tours (e.g. to view BGC transition zones);
- guided mushroom picking tours (e.g. for Japanese visitors);
- capital costs related to anticipated developments such as campgrounds, food and retail stores, alpine huts and possibly lodge construction; and,
- capital and operating costs of the park itself.

Planned developments such as Seven Sisters Ventures project, which is to be situated across the Skeena from the planning area, would also benefit from protection. While the aerial tram, lodge and trail development would be targeted at destination travellers, touring visitors would also be a key market segment. Once markets and capital are drawn to an area, there is always the possibility that a critical mass of activity could be formed, further developing both products and markets. There are a number of front-country opportunities pertaining primarily to campsites, wildlife viewing areas, stopovers and half-day excursions onto nearby roads which are easily available in the Seven Sisters.

There is no widely accepted method of estimating tourism impacts for newly protected areas. The usual practise is to consider the historical experience in the affected area (or, alternatively the vicarious experience of comparable parks) and general economic trends in the sources of tourism demand. The following points are important when considering the impacts of protecting the Seven Sisters:

- Use of BC parks has increased steadily over the last decade, from 15 million visits in 1985 to 25.5 millions visits in 1994, a 5.4 percent annual compound growth. Total BC parks' expenditures in 1994 were $460 million, direct and indirect jobs supported were 9,500 and provincial GDP was $420 million. Thirty-eight percent of all parks activity is attributable to out-of-province visitors; thus, parks are a significant export sector in the BC economy.
- In 1994, Skeena Region parks attracted $15.4 million in visitor expenditures and contributed 370 person-years of employment as well as $16.0 million of GDP. In expenditure and GDP terms, the Skeena represents approximately five percent of the provincial total.
- Given strong and growing global demand for recreation, many newly acquired parks in BC will ultimately attract more visitors as awareness of their existence increases.

3.8 Tourism Resources

After forestry, tourism is the other major private contributor to the Upper Skeena economy. Since the 1973 opening of the Cassiar highway, the Hazeltons have become a popular stop-over for Americans and Canadians traveling to Alaska and the territories. Highway improvements and increased ferry traffic through Prince Rupert have contributed to the growing highway tourism market.

The Kispiox is also becoming increasingly recognized as a tourist destination in its own right. Quality scenery and recreational opportunities, such as fishing, hiking and camping, are attracting growing numbers of wilderness and adventure tourists. While there are not a lot of built attractions in the region, one of the most popular and well-known facilities is 'Ksan, a Gitxsan village replica constructed in 1970 which includes traditional longhouses, a museum, art exhibition centre, carving school, gift shop, totems, art studios and interpretive tours. According to the Village's administration the yearly visitation is about 50 000 over the last five years, with a 50-50 split between domestic and overseas tourists. Germany, France and Italy are all important markets. Recent improvements in the villages include an audio system in the three touring houses and seven long houses and the addition of a new food service outlet.

The BC Accommodations Guide lists six campgrounds/RV parks, two hotels/motels and two lodges in the Kispiox TSA. Except for the lodges, most of these facilities are clustered along Highways 16 and 37. The Kispiox land base supports more than just local tourism outfits and facilities, however. In nearby Smithers, where there is a very significant tourism sector, many accommodation, food service, guiding and transportation services are directly supported by Kispiox-based activities. This is especially true for backcountry recreation — there are many guides and outfitters based in Smithers who use the Kispiox to serve their clients.

3.8.1 Tourism Attributes

A 1991 study of tourism in Northwestern BC revealed that tourism in this area is linked to the area's natural features, particularly for the non-resident component. According to 1989 figures, 27 percent of resident travelers and 59 percent of non-resident travelers had a trip purpose that was natural resource-based. The Kispiox TSA has exceptional natural attributes that make the area attractive to both resident and non-resident travelers. They are as follows:

- High quality recreational fishing opportunities including a Class 1 (Babine) river and six class 2 rivers.
- Abundant and diverse wildlife, including grizzly bear, caribou and goat populations which provide excellent opportunities for wildlife viewing and hunting;
- Numerous mountain ranges and valleys offering a variety of opportunities for a broad range of outdoor activities, including rock climbing, ice climbing, hiking, trail riding, cross-country skiing and downhill skiing; and,
- Numerous lakes and rivers offering a variety of opportunities for water-based recreation including kayaking, canoeing, rafting and fishing.

The Kispiox's natural attributes indicate potential to expand the tourism industry, but other areas in BC have similar attributes and compete for market share. Southern regions have the advantage of being easily accessible from the province's large population centres. However, the Hazeltons area offers wilderness opportunities, which are diminishing as resources are developed in the more accessible regions of the province. If wilderness opportunities in the Kispiox are maintained the region's appeal to visitors may increase.

3.8.2 Outdoor & Adventure Tourism Operations

In the North by Northwest Tourism Region[16], outdoor/adventure tourism products (guide outfitting, fishing lodges and resorts, and other adventure activities) represented 14 percent of all non-resident visitor activity in 1991. This was six percent above the BC average.

Operators may specialize in one type of product or they may offer a variety of products at one site. These operators typically offer services to only a few clients at any one time and therefore the number of clients served annually is quite small. The potential for growth in this sector will depend, in part, on maintaining high quality mid and backcountry recreational experiences.

The sports fishing and fishing lodge industry is largely dependent on fishing quality, but scenic beauty and remoteness are also features which clients rate highly. The northwest region is famous for its trophy sized steelhead from the Skeena system, primarily the Kispiox, but also the Babine and Bulkley Rivers. Rainbow trout are also a prized species. There are 55 guiding licences and over 9 000 angling days approved for the Kispiox, but anecdotal information suggests that actual activity is significantly higher. As with guide-outfitting, increasing access to remote areas will reduce the wilderness quality of the sports fishing product. This could have an impact on fishing lodge operations. Another contentious issue, which will affect the sports fishing lodges, is allocation of fish between commercial, aboriginal and local recreational fisheries.

Hunting opportunities include moose, deer, wolf, mountain goat, caribou, grizzly and black bear. It is estimated that approximately 81 percent of northwestern BC guide-outfitter clients are from the US. There are two licensed guide-outfitters operating entirely within the TSA, and another 11 whose areas are either partly within or adjoin the TSA boundaries. The main concern of guide-outfitters is maintaining wilderness hunting experiences for the international market. As more roads go into these areas (from timber harvesting and mining exploration and development), hunting activity by local residents could increase. This could lead to more hunting pressures which would affect guide-outfitter operations.

The interest in adventure tourism has stimulated growth in the number of businesses offering unique adventure tourism products. Some guide-outfitters and fishing lodge operators are becoming involved in adventure tourism as well. Adventure tourism products which are viable in the Kispiox include:

- ice climbing, ski mountaineering and rock climbing courses and packages;
- day trip or week long dog sled excursions;
- rafting and canoeing trips;
- guided snowmobile tours;
- guided trail rides;
- guided day hikes and backpacking tours;
- outdoor education programs; and

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[16] In about 1998 the North By Northwest Tourism region was amalgamated with the Peace River Alaska Highway Tourism Association to become the Northern British Columbia Tourism Association.

- guided back-country skiing.

These operations rely on a relatively unspoiled natural resource base. To date, the scenic, wildlife and wilderness attributes of the area have made it a viable contender in the outdoor/adventure tourism market. However, increased access and resource development may reduce the potential for this component of the tourism industry to provide stable jobs and income in the long-term.

3.9 Kispiox Area SWOT Analysis

In early 2001, a workshop was held in Hazelton with various tourism stakeholders from the immediate area. To follow is a chart (Exhibit 5), which summarizes the comments, ideas and suggestions generated at this session:

Exhibit 5: Results from Kispiox Tourism Planning Workshop

DISCUSSION ITEM	COMMENTS, IDEAS, SUGGESTIONS		
Tourism Strengths	mushroom & other botanical forest products or tours to draw visitors traditional use of flora & fauna opportunity to put cultural-spin on any and all tourism development projects 'Ksan Village traditional harvesting and processing		
Tourism Concerns	local area has limited awareness in the marketplace, especially in Europe river rafting regulations are too strict		
Long List of Potential Activities	jet boating air tours 2x2 highway touring 4x4 backcountry touring agri-tourism Provincial Parks \ Animal assisted packing (Lama/Horse)	special events (rodeo) snowshoing dog sledding fly fishing heli-skiing heli-hiking snowmobiling nature observation rafting / kayaking	backcountry skiing cross-country skiing 'Ksan dancers indigenous feasts / potlatches mountain biking backbacking

SHORT LIST OF PRIORITY TOURISM ACTIVITIES & ASSOCIATED DISCUSSION POINTS	
Cultural & Historical	potential for get-a-way "culture camps" opportunity for First Nations "Spa" packages through the development of cultural destination resorts & facilities (i.e.: sweat lodges) ○ link spa facility with 'Ksan ○ ensure that facility is appropriately located (i.e.: on water and accessible to water, power, sewage treatment, labour supply, etc.) ○ this product would appeal to Asian market, European market, aging population generally, fishing tourists, etc. development issues include: ○ land title issues ○ joint venture ownership agreements may be required ○ availability of training programs for staff many houses (Wilp's) do not want those opportunities identified (inventoried) problematic due to overlapping territories and overlapping of activities in each area opportunity for visitors to participate in cultural activities (i.e.: smoking salmon, canoe building, traditional fishing and processing, etc.)
Agri-Tourism	could develop tours (i.e.: berry tours/mushroom tours) with a commission to house groups affected may want to develop a Pine mushroom map but First Nations have concerns about

SHORT LIST OF PRIORITY TOURISM ACTIVITIES & ASSOCIATED DISCUSSION POINTS

	potential for habitat degradation by pickers
Hiking / Backpacking	developed trail infrastructure is required (i.e.: the re-establishment of the Telegraph Trail, including huts & designated campgrounds) carrying capacity of the area is a concern (environmental impacts) area is lacking outdoor operators recreation inventories are a good starting point developed trails can be too expensive to maintain in high quality insurance for operators can be restrictive other concerns include ownership issues and maintenance issues
Nature Observation	opportunity for animal assisted recreation within this category concern regarding carrying capacity and impact on wildlife
Rafting / Kayaking / Drifting	problem with industry standards uncertainty regarding the regional draw for these activities carrying capacity limits must be put inplace
Camping	the opportunity to view bears and areas of high cultural value are the draw for this market
Eco-Backroad Touring	many of the local roads do not require 4x4 vehicles logging trucks pose a danger when associated with high density tourism areas guided road tours are a definite idea to look into and could be modified to provide more complete packages (i.e.: overnight camping, fishing, berry picking, etc.) frontcountry tourism features should also be included
Climbing / Mountaineering	lots of opportunity and only one existing operator animal assisted could perhaps be included with this activity
Other Tourism Development Opportunities	educational tourism must recognize aging population and plan for such art-based tourism products winter product packages(i.e.: backcountry ski tours) snowmobile packages (but major competition in close-in markets) riverboat tours leaving Prince Rupert & docking at Hazelton (to include tours of Old Town and 'Ksan)

3.10 Statistics — Visitors to Northwestern BC

The development of, and access to, up-to-date and pertinent visitor research is fundamental to the successful design, development and operation of a tourism service or product. The importance of visitor research as been well stated by Tourism British Columbia[17]:

> *The future success of BC's tourism industry requires detailed market information on visitors (both resident and non-resident) who travel within the Province. This information will enable the industry to better understand who these visitors are, the type of trips they take, their travel motivations and trip satisfaction, as well as trip planning processes. This in turn will help the industry to better market its products, and to meet the needs of the travelling public.*[18]

Unfortunately, data sources do not exist which comprehensively account for visitors to Northwestern BC. Presently there are three main sources of visitor data: community-based Visitor InfoCentres; provincially-based visitor surveys which occur from time to time (the last BC visitor survey was completed for the 1995/96 visitor season); and a ten year old regional rubber-tire visitor survey undertaken by the North By Northwest Tourism Association of BC (1991).

While regional Visitor InfoCentres diligently record statistics of visitors availing themselves of their services — more often than not the statistics generated within the centres are very general in nature and only account for those visitors actually contacting the InfoCentre directly (walking in and/or contacting for information). They do not and can not provide a comprehensive picture of the myriad of visitors entering the region each tourism season.

Over the past number of years, provincial visitor survey initiatives have less than effectively surveyed visitors to this area of the province. The main item of concern is the lack of visitor survey / contact points addressing the Highway #37 "North To Alaska" highway corridor. Survey contact points have been facilitated along the Highway #16 corridor (usually Prince George & Prince Rupert) but visitors entering or exiting the region via the Highway #37 corridor are mostly missed during these provincial visitor surveys. In recognition that a vast number of visitors to the study area utilize this corridor, regional data summations are weak in this respect.

Nevertheless, the 1995/96 Provincial Visitor Study remains the only real source of regional visitor statistics for the study area[19]. To follow is a brief review of the results for Northwestern BC (NWBC) as generated in this study. It is wise to regard the following as "indicators" only and not definitive visitor statistics.

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[17] British Columbia Visitor Study: Report on Travel in British Columbia – Destination Report: The Report on Visitors to Northern British Colombia Tourism Region: Northwest, Tourism BC, 1998.

[18] Ibid. No.: 17, page 3.

[19] With some historical data found in the: 1991 North By Northwest Regional Visitor Survey, North By Northwest Tourism Association, 1991 — which is discussed later in this proposal document.

3.10.1 Visitor Volume and Value

It has been estimated that about 2.2 million visitors travelled to NWBC for a day or overnight trip, 73% of whom are residents of BC. The total NWBC share of provincial visitation is about 7%.

Visitors to NWBC spend about $425 million per season with non-residents accounting for 33% of this spending and BC residents providing 67% of regional revenues. Both non-resident and resident visitors spend on average $54 per day during their stay. However, non-residents spend about $234 per stay in the region as compared to resident spending of about $178 per stay. The total NWBC share of provincial tourism revenues is about 5%.

Non-resident visitors spend an average of 4.4 days in the region and resident visitors stay in the region about 3.4 days per visit.

3.10.2 Visitor Origin

"Other" Canadians accounted for the greatest proportion (38%) of non-resident visitors to NWBC. Close-in regional US and Long Haul US visitors made up a further 23% and 17% respectively of travellers to the region. Overseas visitors accounted for about 13% of non-resident guests.

Resident visitors from northern BC accounted for the largest proportion (55%) of travellers to the region. Visitors from southern BC accounted for 34% of resident visitors to NWBC.

3.10.3 Trip Purpose

The main purpose of the visitors to NWBC who were on an overnight trip in BC and visited the region was for leisure purposes (81% non-residents and 86% residents). Other Canadians and US visitors were the most likely markets (21%) to have traveled for business purposes.

Nearly one-half of non-resident regional leisure travellers journeyed to BC to visit friends or relatives (44%). Long Haul/Overseas leisure travellers cited general sightseeing (39%) as their main reason for travel, followed closely by visiting friends and relatives (30%).Outdoor/wilderness activities were given as the main reason for travel by 20% of regional visitors (other Canada & close-in US) and 16% of Long-Haul/Overseas visitors.

Nearly one-half of resident leisure visitors (47%) traveled in BC to visit friends or relatives (VFR). About 17% cited outdoor activities as their main reason for travel.

3.10.4 Visitor Demographics

Non-residents averaged 44 years of age. Those from Long Haul/Overseas markets tended to be older with 38% aged 55 years and older. Nearly one-half of close-in 'other' Canadians and US visitors (47%) were between the ages of 35 and 54.

Resident visitors averaged 42 years of age and were more likely to be between 18 and 34 years of age than their non-resident counterparts (35% versus 30% respectively).

3.10.5 Visitation to the Local Study Area

Non-resident visitors travelled extensively throughout the Northwest region with the Kitimat/Stikine Regional District area[20] capturing about 29% of the total non-resident visitors.

3.10.6 Seasonal Variations

As expected, the summer season is by far the busiest tourism season in NWBC with 73% of the non-resident Long Haul/Overseas market visiting during this season. Over half of close-in 'other' Canadians and US visitors (55%) travelled to BC during the summer.

Almost half of the resident market (49%) visited NWBC during the summer season. This market also makes up about 31% of all visitors to NWBC during the winter months.

3.10.7 Overall Visitor Activities

While in Northwestern BC, non-resident visitors showed substantial interest in a number of activities including visiting art galleries/museums/exhibits (25%), city/town sightseeing (16%) and freshwater fishing (15%). Only 8% of non-resident visitors reported visiting friends and relatives while in the region.

Virtually all resident visitors (93%) spent time visiting with friends and relatives during their visit to NWBC. Other activity details are shown in Exhibit 6:

Exhibit 6: Overall Visitor Activities in Northwest BC

ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN IN THE NORTHWEST REGION	VISITORS TO NORTHWEST BC		
	NON-RESIDENT	BC RESIDENT	
	TOTAL %	TOTAL %	NORTH %
Art galleries/museums/exhibits	25	*	*
Sightseeing in the city/town	16	—	—
Freshwater fishing	15	*	*
Sightseeing in the country	9	—	—
Visiting friends or relatives	8	93	94
Zoos/natural displays/gardens	8	*	*
Hiking/backpacking	7	*	*
Nightlife	4	87	
Resting/relaxing	5	—	—

Data on the activities of BC residents in the region was based on an 'aided' question and therefore is not as extensive as the non-resident resident data.
(— denotes "not asked/no answer) (* denotes insufficient sample size to report findings).

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[20] Includes the communities of: Kitimat/Kitamaat Village, Terrace and area, the Nass Valley & Stewart, BC.

3.10.8 Outdoor Activities

During their trip to BC, non-resident visitors partook in a number of outdoor activities with one-half taking part in wildlife viewing/bird watching and 43% visiting National or Provincial parks. Sixteen percent went freshwater or saltwater fishing. In addition, many non-resident tourists visited attractions such as historic sites (43%), art galleries/museums (28%) as well as First Nations cultural sites (26%).

BC residents travelling in BC also partake in outdoor activities with 41% participating in sightseeing and 33% participating in wildlife viewing/bird watching. About 24% partook in hiking/backpacking and nearly one-third (31%) visiting attractions such as historic sites. Results are shown in Exhibit 7.

Exhibit 7: Outdoor Activities Undertaken in Northwest BC

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN	OVERNIGHT VISITORS		
	NON-RESIDENT	BC RESIDENT	
	TOTAL %	TOTAL %	NORTH %
(Net) Land-based activities	59	47	40
Visiting National/Provincial Park	43	19	17
Wildlife viewing/bird watching	50	33	30
Hiking/Backpacking	14	24	19
(Net) Winter Activities	1	3	6
Downhill skiing/snowboarding	1	3	5
(Net) Fishing**	16	19	17
Saltwater fishing	5	—	—
Freshwater fishing	15	—	—
(Net) Boating (BC Residents)	—	14	13
Photography	46	38	27
Sightseeing	—	41	34
Golfing	3	12	12

** Note: Among non-resident visitors, this includes both fresh and saltwater fishing. For BC resident visitors this represents all fishing and it is not possible to break this out on a freshwater and saltwater basis (— denotes 'not asked/no answer')

3.10.9 Visitor Spending Profile

The single largest proportion of expenditures by non-resident visitors went towards package tours purchased in BC (28%). Long Haul/Overseas visitors, 35% of whom purchased packages, drove this predominantly. These visitors spent comparatively less on food and beverage expenses (14%) and accommodations (11%) — most likely because these items were included in the package tours they purchased.

Food, beverages and accommodation represent nearly one-half of the total tourism monies spent in BC (46%) by close-in 'other' Canadians and US visitors. A substantial proportion of expenditures for this market also went towards transportation (18%) and package tours purchased in BC (16%).

Food, beverages and accommodation represent one-half of the total monies spent in the Northwest region by resident visitors. These visitors spent an additional 15% on accommodations while travelling in the region (Exhibit 8).

Exhibit 8: Visitor Spending Profile in Northwest BC

% Distribution of Total Expenditures	Overnight Visitors				
	Non-Resident			BC Resident	
	Non-Resident Total %	Regional Can & US %	Long Haul & Overseas %	Total %	North %
Food & beverage	19	27	14	30	27
Accommodations	14	19	11	18	15
Transportation	16	18	14	21	23
Souvenirs & gifts	6	7	5	7	7
Package tours purchased in BC	28	16	35	*	*
Outdoor activities	3	3	3	6	7
Attractions & cultural events	1	1	—	5	4
Other expenses	15	9	17	12	16

Non-resident expenditures represent all expenditures while in the province. BC resident expenditures represent only expenditures in the region. (— denotes less than 1%) (* denotes package expenses for BC resident visitors were considered pre-trip expenditures and were not included in the visitors' expenditures while travelling in BC).

Chapter 4

4 Gitxsan First Nation

The Kispiox forest district area and surrounding lands are home to more than 7,000 people of the Gitxsan First Nation. This accounts for more than 80% of the population of the study area. The Gitxsan First Nation continue to use the land and resources of the study area for their spiritual, cultural, and economic subsistence. The Gitxsan have become increasingly interested in exploring and developing ecotourism, adventure travel and cultural tourism opportunities. Indeed, as noted earlier, the Gitxsan operate the most important existing tourism attraction in the study area – the world renowned 'Ksan Historical Village. This wonderful facility already attracts an estimated 50,000 visitors a year to Hazelton[21]. As such, 'Ksan provides a very significant existing tourism base upon which to build.

When the MSBTC was considering initiating this study, the Gitxsan First Nation expressed a strong interest in supporting a Tourism Opportunity Study (TOS). However, the Gitxsan were concerned that a study methodology be used that was culturally appropriate to their Nations' traditional structure. As a result, there was an agreement that this study would examine an area larger than the Kispiox Forest District boundaries in order to encompass the larger area of the Gitxsan First Nations' claimed traditional territories. As well there was agreement to examine the issues and identify tourism opportunities within the Gitxsans' nine identified watershed administration units.

The primary purpose of this Chapter is two-fold (i) to provide non-local readers of this document with a brief summary of Gitxsan First Nations cultural structure and tourism interests and (ii) to provide a summary of the information that was gathered through an internal Gitxsan consultation designed to address potential tourism opportunities.

4.1 The Gitxsan People

In Treaty negotiations, the Gitxsan have claimed their traditional territories (Exhibit 9) occupy an area of 30,000 square kilometres (about five times the size of PEI). There are approximately 10,000 members of the Gitxsan nation, about 70% of whom live on the traditional territories. Most live in five Gitxsan villages and two provincial municipalities. The Gitxsan people make up about 80% of the total population living in the expanded study area. It is a land of rugged, glacier-capped mountains, lush forests, and swift-flowing rivers. The Babine, Bulkley, Kispiox and Skeena Rivers are all found in Gitxsan territory and are home to abundant salmon and steelhead runs. Spruce, subalpine fir, hemlock, cedar and pine compose extensive forests on the territory. The rich ecosystem supports a wide variety of mammals and birds

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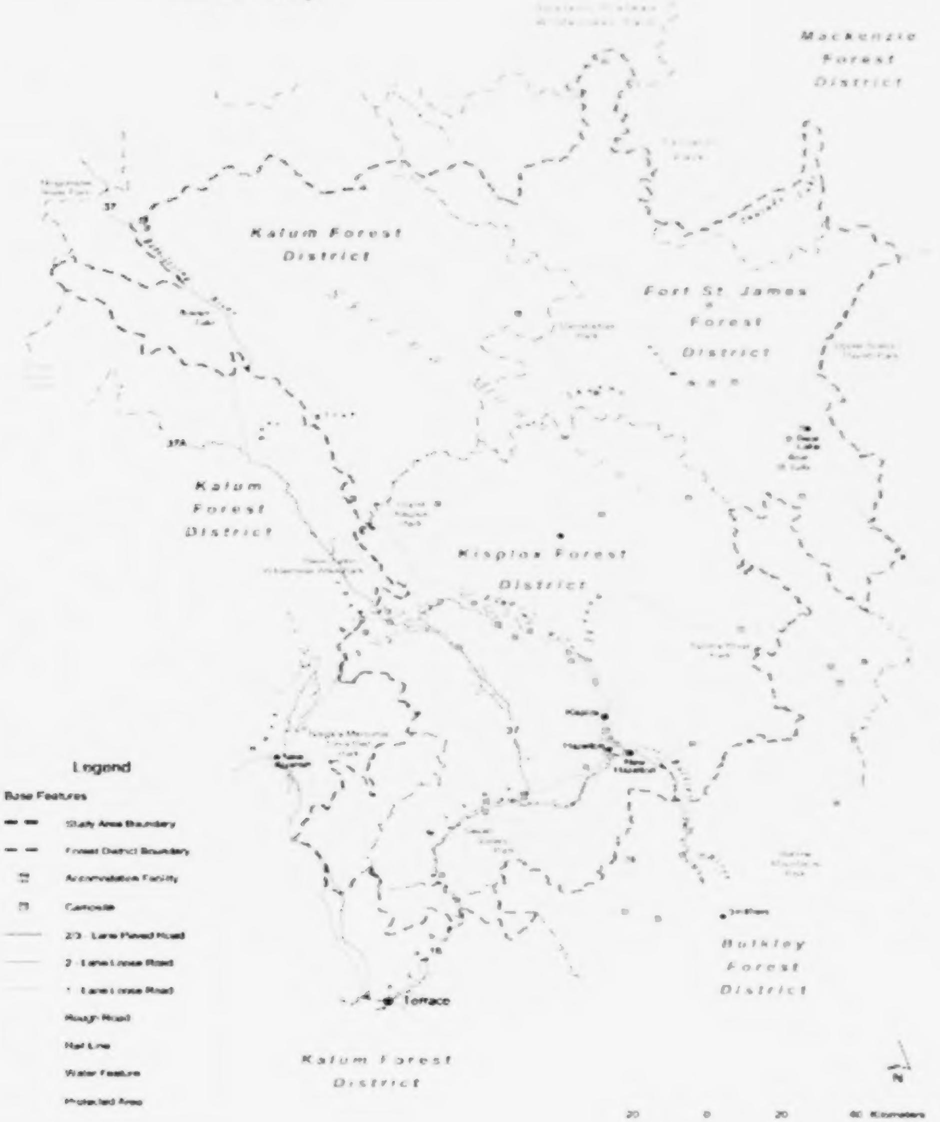
[21] "best estimation" based on a variety of visitation options, statistics and as suggested by 'Ksan Management.

Kispiox Tourism Opportunity Study
Base Map


Mackenzie Forest District
Kalum Forest District
Fort St. James Forest District
37
37A
Kalum Forest District
Kispiox Forest District
Kispiox
Hazelton
New Hazelton
37
16
Smithers
Bulkley Forest District
Terrace
Kalum Forest District
Legend
Base Features
Study Area Boundary
Forest District Boundary
Accommodation Facility
Campsite
2/3 - Lane Paved Road
2 - Lane Loose Road
1 - Lane Loose Road
Rough Road
Rail Line
Water Feature
Protected Area
N
20
0
20
40 Kilometers

Gitxsan people believe they have lived on the territory since time immemorial and archaeological methods have so far found evidence of more than 10,000 years of occupation. Ancient village sites include Gitangasx and Temlaxam and the adaawk (oral history) involves a migration from the north to populate these communities. Temlaxam was the largest of all ancient villages and was the source of another migration to more recent village sites after a flood, said in the adaawk to be the result of disrespect of Gitxsan hunting laws (ayookw), caused its destruction.

The English translation of Gitxsan is "people of the river of the mist." Linguists have classified Gitxsanimax –the language spoken by Gitxsan people – as part of the Tsimshian language group.

The Gitxsan are closely allied with their coastal neighbouring tribes, especially through marriage and trade to the west with the Gitanyow, Nisga'a and Tsimshian and to the east and south with the Wet'suwet'en. Thaltan to the north and Carrier to the northeast are also neighbours to the Gitxsan.

Traditional Gitxsan life revolved around responsibilities and privileges associated with Wilp (House group) membership. The landbase provided for the needs of House members including food, clothing, tools, shelter and spiritual sustenance. Food gathering was seasonal and involved travel to different parts of the House group's territory and fishing holes on river sites. Four species of salmon, along with steelhead, were a major seasonal focus and, after drying, provided food throughout the year. Fishing methods were elaborate; involving fish traps, weirs and wheels, and took place at or near the spawning beds ("head end" fishery) where sophisticated management knowledge was practiced in order to ensure a sustainable return in future years. Plants, berries and meat from animals were also important food sources. The traditional economy was based on trade, especially with bordering nations, by river and overland on what is known as grease trails.

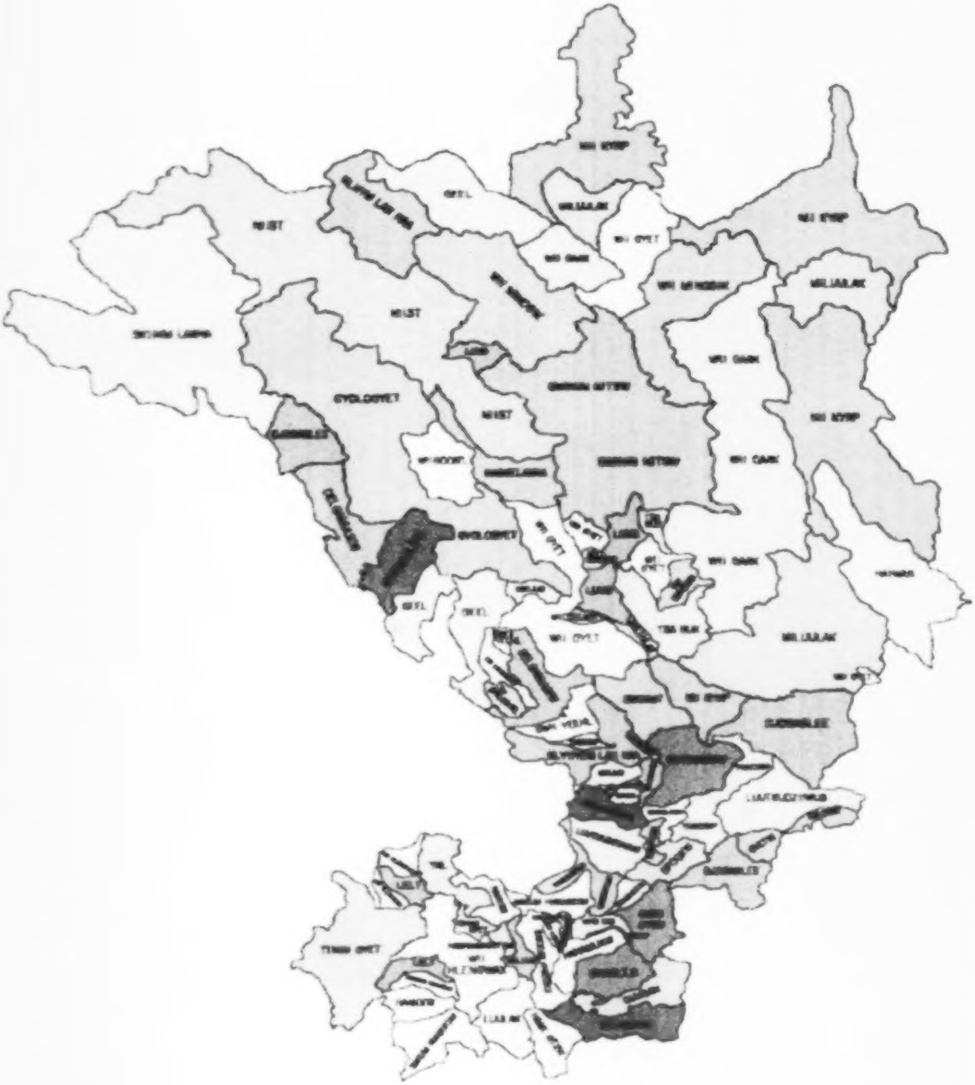
Today, traditional activities are still practiced by many Gitxsan on the landbase. In an area where 80% unemployment is the norm, activities such as trapping, mushroom harvesting and a commercial inland fishery constitute a critical input for the cash economy. Many people still depend on the territorial landbase for sustenance, especially in the form of salmon, moose meat and berries.

4.2 The Traditional System

The traditional, hereditary system is active in the Gitxsan nation. It is a matrilineal system with members of a Wilp, or House group, tracing their lineage through their mothers. All Gitxsan belong to a Wilp, which is the basic unit for social, economic and political purposes. The Wilp is a collective of closely related people. It consists of one to several families and can number from 20 to more than 200 people. Each Wilp has a hereditary chief. A hereditary chief may have several wing chiefs who perform particular functions for House members such as planning and administering tourism, fishing or forestry work. Each of the more than 50 Gitxsan House groups (Wilp) have specific land bases and fishing holes within the 30,000 square kilometres of claimed traditional territory (Exhibit 10).

The House groups belong to one of **four clans**: Lax Gibuu (Wolf), Lax Seel (Frog), Gisgaast (Fireweed) and Lax Skiik (Eagle). House groups are organized into **nine watershed units** for administrative purposes.

Exhibit 10: Gitxsan House (Wilp) Groups



Note: An onion-skin overlay of all Wilp boundaries is included with this document package. This may be used to review the suggested tourism opportunity areas by activity and by Wilp boundary.

The feast hall, called the potlach by some coastal First Nations, is the forum where business, social and political decisions are legitimized in the traditional system. The Gitxsan traditional society also has a series of laws dealing with conservation, trespass and activities on the House territories. Traditional history and laws are passed on orally. Each Wilp has an adaawk, or oral history, which describes important events in the House's existence. The carvings on a totem pole record significant events in a House's adaawk and thus reinforce a Wilp's ownership of its territory.

4.3 Gitxsan Watershed Administration Units

For administrative purposes, the Gitxsan Treaty Office organized the House groups on a watershed basis in the 1990s. Watershed units have a basis in the traditional system in that House groups who share boundaries, or are nearby one another, have more interaction over the sharing and conservation of natural resources. House groups also belong to one of four Gitxsan clans and this may be another avenue for cooperative work within or between watersheds. Another source of cooperative interaction between House groups relates to the lineage of the father's side of a House member. Although the Gitxsan is a matrilineal system, where House group membership is through the mother's side, House members will also enjoy certain privileges on the territory of the House group their father belongs to.

There are nine watershed administrative units in the Gitxsan territories: West Skeena, Kitseguecla, Lower Skeena, Bulkley, Kispiox, Babine, Upper Skeena, Sustut and Nass (Exhibit 11). These watershed administration units are shown on all of the tourism product opportunity maps in Section 7 by way of purple delineation lines.

Unit 10, shown on the forthcoming maps, is not part of the Gitxsan Area of Interest. This unit refers to the traditional territory claimed by the Gitanyow First Nation and falls within the Kispiox Forest District boundaries. Therefore this area is discussed similarly to all other watershed administration units.

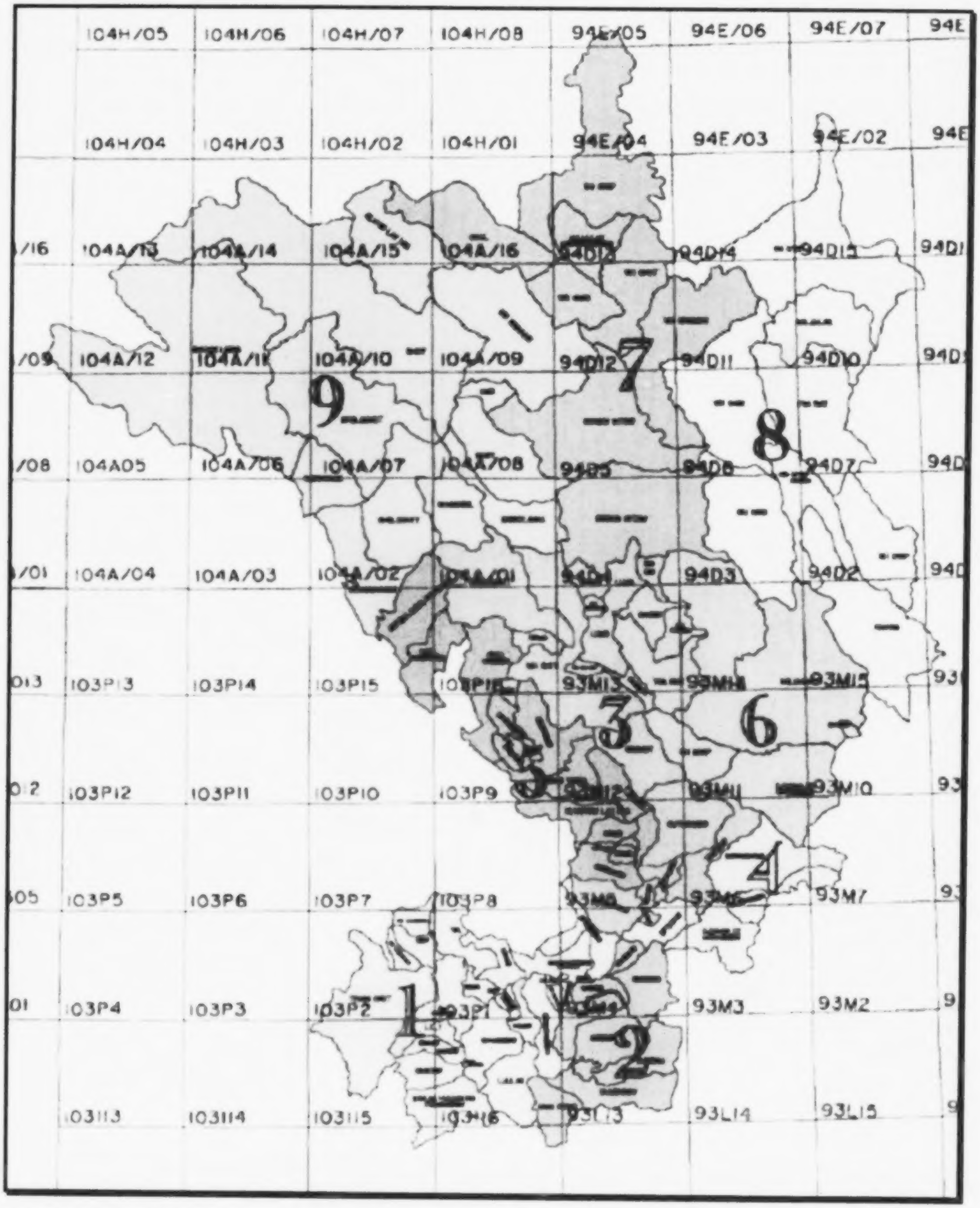
4.4 The Gitxsan Consultation Process

Consultation with the Gitxsan constituted a special component of the overall public consultation segment of this Tourism Opportunity Study.

Initially, meetings were held with the Gitxsan Treaty Office to determine Gitxsan interest in tourism opportunities on the traditional territories and to assess the current state of activity by House groups in the tourism sector. Extensive research was undertaken at the resource centre at the Gitxsan Treaty Office, reviewing House territory maps, archival records, reports and documents.

House groups who have initiated or are considering tourism projects were notified by telephone about the overall TOS workshop facilitated by Greg Meredith. Subsequent to the overall workshop, a series of Gitxsan watershed unit workshops were held. Each of the Gitxsan House groups (Wilp's) was alerted by letter regarding the watershed workshops and a number of House groups who have begun to consider tourism projects on their traditional territories were also contacted by telephone.

Exhibit 11: Nine Gitxsan Watershed Administration Units


104H/05
104H/06
104H/07
104H/08
94E/05
94E/06
94E/07
104H/04
104H/03
104H/02
104H/01
94E/04
94E/03
94E/02
104A/13
104A/14
104A/15
104A/16
94D13
94D14
94D15
104A/12
104A/11
104A/10
104A/09
94D12
94D11
94D10
104A05
104A/06
104A/07
104A/08
94D5
94D6
94D7
104A/04
104A/03
104A/02
104A/01
94D4
94D3
94D2
103P13
103P14
103P15
103P16
93M13
93M14
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103P12
103P11
103P10
103P9
93M12
93M11
93M10
103P5
103P6
103P7
103P8
93M8
93M6
93M7
103P4
103P3
103P2
103P1
93M4
93M3
93M2
103I13
103I14
103I15
103I16
93L13
93L14
93L15
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9

Throughout the process, informal one-on-one interviews with House group members took place and several telephone interviews were held with House members who responded to the watershed workshop letter but were unable to attend any of the workshop sessions.

All information from the process was registered on maps and/or became part of the watershed SWOT analysis information (Section 4.6).

4.5 Gitx̲san First Nations Tourism Development Interests

In tourism, there has been a major social and economic focus from the Gitx̲san perspective during the last five years. Socially, Band Councils have directly run training courses and have supported Band members who pursued post-secondary training in tourism. Clans and House groups have also supported on-the-ground training on their territories that relates to tourism. There is also Gitx̲san and non-Gitx̲san membership in the Upper Skeena Tourism Association, a non-profit society formed in 1999 which has cooperative marketing as one of its mandates. Economic initiatives by Gitx̲san in tourism are increasing rapidly and include individual businesses, Band, Clan and House group projects. In 2000-2001 alone, more than $1.5 million has been invested in tourism infrastructure such as cultural museums, visitor centres and ecolodges.

4.5.1 Local Tourism Development Initiatives

4.5.1.1 GITX̲SAN TOURISM INITIATIVES

Five infrastructure projects have received funding from the Coastal Economic Adjustment Initiative since the beginning of 2000. CEAI provides $250,000 in funding, either in grant or repayable loan. Each of the project applicants must contribute a portion of their own financial resources – on average a minimum of $100,000 in support per project was supplied by the applicants. CEAI supported projects include:

4.5.1.2 GITANYOW HISTORIC VILLAGE

The Gitanyow Huwilp Society, a hereditary-chief based organization, is in the process of upgrading the totem pole site in Gitanyow (Kitwancool). The poles are already known for their excellent condition, numbers and expert carving. The project involves building a museum/visitor centre, repositioning and refurbishing the poles, and landscaping.

4.5.1.3 GITWANGAK CULTURAL CENTRE AND MOTEL

Gitwangak Reserve is located at the junction of Highways 16 and 37. It is well positioned to take advantage of the tourism traffic on the way to Alaska and to Prince Rupert. Motel plans have been in the works for a number of years. The cultural centre complements the motel. Both are to be located on a site on Highway 16, west of the junction with Highway 37.

4.5.1.4 LAX SKIIK VENTURES ECOLODGE

Lax Skiik Ventures Society is creating a cultural camp and ecolodge infrastructure in an isolated location on the Skeena River, approximately halfway between Gitwangak and Terrace. Access is by boat or train. All construction has been eco-friendly, with building materials primarily found on-site and little in the way of heavy machinery used. The centrepiece of the project is a large longhouse that provides accommodation and food serving space.

4.5.1.5 'KSAN HISTORIC VILLAGE AND MUSEUM

'Ksan has an international reputation and has received a number of national and provincial tourism awards. The longhouse buildings and other structures at the site, at the confluence of the Skeena and Bulkley Rivers adjacent to the Village of Hazelton, are more than 25 years old. The project involves the upgrading of the longhouses and museum building. This attraction is the main tourism anchor for the area, attracting approximately 50,000 visitors annually.

4.5.1.6 SKEENA ECOEXPEDITIONS

The Kispiox Band has built a tourism information centre and upgraded a cultural camp. They offer river-rafting trips on the Kispiox River and totem pole guided tours based out of the information centre. Other services and activities, such as canoe rentals, salmon barbeques and sport fishing guiding, are available from the centre. The cultural camp is located at Kuldo Lake, a remote site approximately 100 km north of Kispiox on the Skeena River.

4.5.1.7 VILLAGE OF HAZELTON

The Village of Hazelton was a partner in two Community Economic Development planning processes in 1997 and 1998 where community members identified tourism as one economic sector where they would like to see development. The CED processes also articulated residents values and visions which assisted in setting socioeconomic priorities within the tourism industry sector. As a result of this work a downtown revitalization committee was formed and in the winter of 2001 the Village made a successful application to the CEAI program for a riverfront revitalization project that includes a dock in the Skeena River for riverboat traffic, riverfront trail work and landscaping. The Village also owns a replica steamboat on the riverfront and has leased the facility to a local entrepreneur who is running a co-operative artist's retail outlet from the premises. Council voted to provide financial assistance to the Misty Rivers Arts Council in their project to conduct living history street theatre performances in the downtown core during the summer of 2001. The Village has also undertaken an interpretive signage program. Polly Sargeant Memorial Park along the riverfront features an interpretive display on the mining and riverboat history of the community and the sign also promotes a historical walking tour highlighting heritage buildings.

4.5.1.8 PRIVATE INITIATIVES

In contrast to other areas of the local economy which are experiencing stagnation and shrinkage, the tourism sector during the last five years has seen an extraordinary number of small business start ups. These start ups have encompassed many of the tourism sub sectors: accommodation in the form of Bed & Breakfasts; food and beverage in the form of cafes and fresh-baked take-away storefronts; retail in the form of artist and local crafters cooperatives; and guiding ventures for a wide variety of activities including river rafting, horseback riding, jet-boat excursions, and cultural ecotourism tours. More than 10 businesses have been formed during the past five years and this has lead, in conjunction with the CED work discussed above, to the formation of the Upper Skeena Tourism Association in 1999. The Association promotes tourism in the Upper Skeena and represents its member's interests on issues affecting tourism. The first Upper Skeena Tourism Conference was held in May 1999.

4.5.1.9 OTHER INITIATIVES UNDER WAY:

The Gitanmaax Band has taken steps in tourism training, infrastructure and planning during the past several years. The Band sponsored a three-month river rafting guide and backcountry hiking guide-training program in 1998. Several participants in the program have started small businesses since then. The Band commissioned two tourism studies, one in 1999 and one in 2001. One was a feasibility study on a heritage park site located on reserve at the Hagwilget Bridge. The other is a concept plan for a boat launch and riverfront trail project along the Skeena River. Plans are currently under way to pursue both projects. The latter involves partnering with the Village of Hazelton on their riverfront revitalization project described below.

The Gitsegukla Band has spent more than $300,000 over the past three years in the development of an industrial hemp sustainable agriculture project. A component of the project involves tours of the hemp fields, processing facilities and retail sales of locally-produced hemp related projects to tourists. The Gitsegukla Hemp Corporation has grown industrial hemp in a test plot for each of the last three years in partnership with Health Canada, the University of Northern British Columbia and the National Research Council.

A number of House groups (Wilp) have also begun tourism projects and are in various stages of creating infrastructure on their House territories. A few of these include:

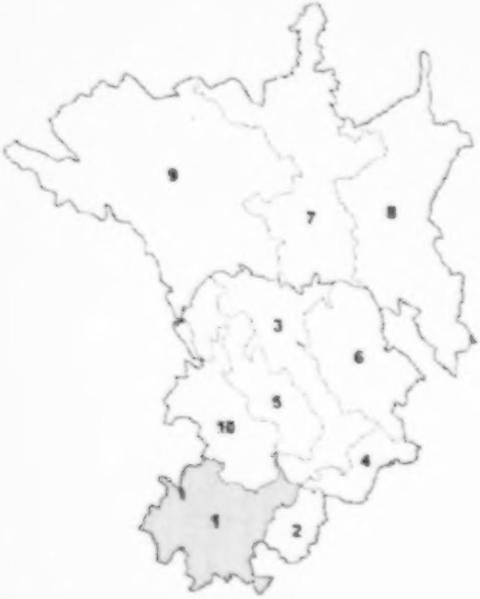
- a series of cabins and trail infrastructure for use as a cultural camp by Wilp Gutginuxw on Pine Nut Creek at approximately km 18 on the Salmon River Road;
- a concept plan by Wilp Dawamuxw (Geel) for a backcountry lodge in the Upper Kispiox;
- an initiative by Wilp Mululaak for wilderness cabins northeast of Kisgegas accessible by the Shedin Forest Service road;
- a venture by Wilp Haxsbagwootxw for a cabin-to-cabin hiking infrastructure in the Seven Sisters range; and
- a feasibility study for a backcountry cultural camp by Wilp Gwininnitxw either on the Sicintine River or the Slamgeesh River (Wilp Gwininnitxw has also purchased a building in Hazelton and opened a retail cooperative for local artists).

4.6 Tourism SWOT Analysis by Gitxsan Watershed Administration Unit

The following charts identify House groups belonging to each watershed unit, the Western name of the current hereditary chief for each House territory and a sample of specific features in the watershed that have high values for tourism opportunities, especially in the cultural sector. A discussion on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis) for the watershed unit – from a cultural tourism perspective – accompanies the chart in each section.

It should be stressed that in the Gitxsan traditional system, development on a specific area of land, whether it be in tourism or any other economic initiative, is accomplished through the House group who owns that territory, not on a wider watershed basis. It is beyond the scope and resources of this report to undertake a specific SWOT analysis for each of the more than 50 House group territories. However, additional resources and effort were devoted to the Kispiox TOS in order to take the step of analyzing the landbase from the Gitxsan watershed administrative unit perspective.

4.6.1 Gitxsan Watershed Administrative Unit 1: West Skeena



Unit number 10 represents the traditional territory claimed by the Gitanyow First Nation

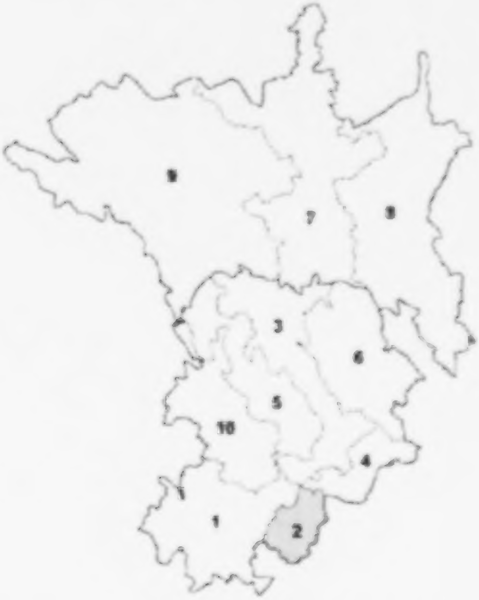
HOUSE GROUP	CHIEF	SAMPLE OF FEATURES IN WATERSHED
Tenim Gyet	Art Matthews Jr.	Seven Sisters Provincial Park Skeena River Hwy. 16 viewpoints of peaks and Skeena River Cedarvale backroad Fiddler Creek infrastructure (Lax'Skiik Ventures) pine mushrooms Kitwanga Mountain Provincial Park Meanshkinisht
Wii Hlengwax	Lance Williams	
Lelt	Lloyd Ryan	
Haakxw	Mike Denomme	
Yal	Aubrey Jackson	
Sakxum Higookx	Vernon Smith	
Sakxum Higookx (Te'Welasxw)	Allan Johnson	
Sakxum Higookx (Sima Diik)	Vernon Smith – Calvin Hyzims	
Haluus	Billy Morrison	
Gaxsbgabaxs	Gertie Watson	
Haxsbagwootxw	Ken Harris	
Luulak	Sandra Williams	

4.6.1.1 SWOT ANALYSIS

Lying within the Kalum and Kispiox Forest Districts, the West Skeena watershed unit contains a main stem section of the Skeena River and the dominant peaks of the Seven Sisters mountain range.

STRENGTHS	**WEAKNESSES**
Access for activities and retail is excellent along Hwy. 16, the Cedarvale backroad, Hwy. 37, the Kitwanga backroad and VIA rail a trail infrastructure exists the Seven Sisters range is spectacular with peaks, glaciers and extensive alpine; can be seen from viewpoints along roads as well as accessed by the maintained trails there are dedicated Gitx̲san House members carrying out tourism-related activities on the landbase, especially by the Lax'Skiik who have undertaken extensive ecological inventory work along the west side of the Skeena and up the Fiddler Creek drainage totem poles at Gitwangak	very little as far as Gitx̲san tourism infrastructure on the landbase to keep visitors in the area relatively developed nature of the landscape, between roads, agriculture and clearcut logging removes pristine and wilderness experience for some interpretive signage along highway is almost absent lack of trained Gitx̲san personnel in tourism inability to acquire capital for tourism infrastructure
OPPORTUNITIES	**THREATS**
the Seven Sisters were designated a provincial park in June, 2000: this will raise the profile of the area and opens co-management prospects; alpine hiking, hut-to-hut, winter activities, mountain goat viewing all very good possibilities Fiddler Creek, west side of Skeena and Seven Sisters contain many traditional use areas the Hwy. 16 corridor: high tourism traffic for area with many heading to Alaska by road or to the ferry in Prince Rupert; good tourism retail opportunities, viewpoints for Seven Sisters and Skeena River railway: VIA Rail provides passenger service through the watershed unit with at least three whistle stops possible fishing: good access to smokehouses for cultural tourism activities pine mushrooms: offer opportunity in active participation and retail other tourism operators: Lax'Skiik Ventures (ecolodge), Gitwangak (hotel), Gitanyow (museum), and others operating in area provide partnership opportunities	visual impact of continued industrial logging on landbase, especially along west side of Skeena River global recession deteriorating road system, especially Hwy. 37 north to Alaska uncertainty of aboriginal title creating poor investment climate establishment of non-local tourism businesses resulting in loss of local control over tourism industry

4.6.2 Gitx̲san Watershed Administrative Unit 2: Kitseguecla



Unit number 10 represents the traditional territory claimed by the Gitanyow First Nation

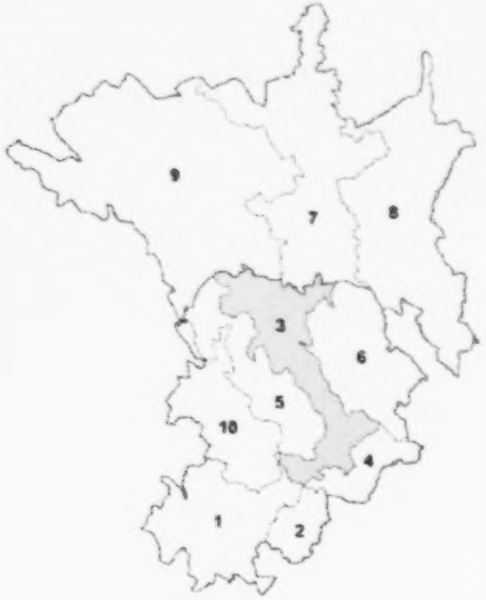
HOUSE GROUP	CHIEF	SAMPLE OF FEATURES IN WATERSHED
Haak Asxw	Larry Wright	McDonnel Lake
Duubisxw	Bernadette McLean	Kitsegukla Lake
Guxsan	Billy Marsden	Red Rose-Juniper Creek
Gwagl'lo	Rod Sampere	Comeau Creek
Hanamuxw	Joan Ryan	Ashman Ridge
Wiis Dis	Ralph Johnson	Kitsuns
Gwis Gyen	Lorne Campbell	Hankin Lake

4.6.2.1 SWOT ANALYSIS

Lying within the Kalum and Kispiox Forest Districts, the Kitseguecla watershed unit contains a number of popular lakes for visitors and the southern peaks of the Rocher Deboule Range including the Red Rose area.

STRENGTHS	**WEAKNESSES**
a trail infrastructure exists with a number of trails, including the Comeau Creek trail and the popular trail system into Hankin Lake and Hankin lookout backcountry ski mountaineering use of Ashman Ridge road access on forest service roads to much of the watershed Hwy. 16 frontage and views of the Rocher Deboule Range and Skeena River CN Skeena River crossing mining history and artifacts, especially in Red Rose area village of Gitsegucla – cultural history and current Hwy. 16 opportunities Gitsegucla Hemp project	very little as far as Gitx̱san tourism infrastructure in Gitsegucla and on the landbase to keep visitors in the area washed out Juniper Creek road has limited access to Red Rose area relatively developed nature of the landscape, between roads, mining and clearcut logging removes pristine and wilderness experience for some interpretive signage along highway is almost absent lack of trained Gitx̱san personnel in tourism inability to acquire capital for tourism infrastructure
OPPORTUNITIES	**THREATS**
partnering with existing tourism operators in watershed such as the Copper River Guest Ranch and the Rocky Ridge Chalets Gitsegucla Hemp cultural tourism and retail opportunities for Hwy. 16 traffic (agritourism) multi-activity and multi-day hiking and hut-to-hut access to Seven Sisters area through Kitsuns Gitsegucla village fishing: good access to smokehouses near Skeena River Crossing for cultural tourism activities backcountry skiing, Ashman Ridge, Mulwain Creek, Red Rose parasailing, Comeau Creek	continued industrial logging on landbase, especially Mulwain Creek and the Kitsuns global recession uncertainty of aboriginal title creating poor investment climate establishment of non-local tourism businesses resulting in loss of local control over tourism industry

4.6.3 Gitxsan Watershed Administrative Unit 3: Lower Skeena



Unit number 10 represents the traditional territory claimed by the Gitanyow First Nation

HOUSE GROUP	CHIEF	SAMPLE OF FEATURES IN WATERSHED
Nikateen	Francis Sampson	Hazelton Peak (bowl) Bulkley Junction Provincial Park Bell Lake (Keynton Lake) Hospital Lake Hagwilget Bridge Robinson Lake Nine Mile Sidina Thomlinson Pinenut Creek Tommy Jack Damsumlo Kuldo Lake Old Kuldo Deep Canoe Creek Deadhorse Lake Yukon Telegraph Trail Atna Range
Luutkudziiwus	Art Ridsdale	
Wosimalxha	Victor Mowatt	
Yagosip	Joyce Turner	
Gutginuxw	Willie Morrison	
Wii Eelast	Jim Angus	
Gwoimt	Sadie Harris	
Gwii Yeehl	Chris Skulsh	
Wii Gyet	Lloyd Morrison	
Luus	Roy Wilson	
Ma'uus	Jeffrey Harris	
Wii Minosik	Larry Skulsh	
Tsa Buk	Wilmer Johnson	
Gyologyet	Mary McKenzie	

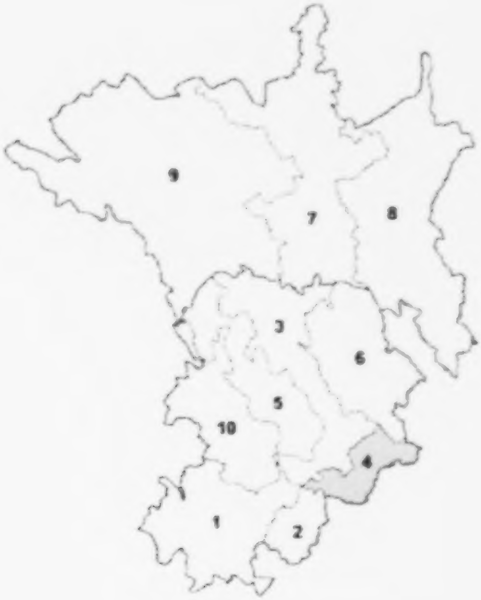
4.6.3.1 SWOT ANALYSIS

Lying within the Kispiox Forest District, the Lower Skeena watershed unit contains populated areas such as the Village of Hazelton and Gitanmaax, as well as ancient Gitxsan village sites, the dominant Mt. Thomlinson, the confluence of the Bulkley and Skeena Rivers and a vast, valley network connected to the Skeena main stem.

Strengths	*Weaknesses*
'Ksan Historic Village Village of Hazelton Gitanmaax trail infrastructure with a number of trails maintained by the Ministry of Forests including Sidina, Thomlinson (Babine Range) and the House group maintained Old Kuldo interpretive trail Hagwilget Bridge site extensive forest service road network including all of the Salmon River FSR and parts of the Kuldo and Damsumlo FSR Yukon Telegraph Trail Old Kuldo village site access to alpine, especially Nine Mile, Sidina and Tommy Jack pass Skeena River main stem Hwy. 62 Bell Lake Forest Service campground: camping, boating, fishing, swimming wildlife	lack of interpretive services and facilities around cultural sites relatively developed nature of the landscape, between roads, agriculture and clearcut logging removes pristine and wilderness experience for some, especially viewscape from Thomlinson, Sidina and Nine Mile Mountains and from parts of the Skeena River some of the sites with high tourism values in the northern part of the watershed are distant from population centres and surfaced roads lack of trained Gitxsan personnel in tourism inability to acquire capital for tourism infrastructure general lack of tourism infrastructure to easily access features and for accommodation purposes

Opportunities	*Threats*
a number of guided-hiking day trips are practical on the Forest Service maintained trails cultural interpretive tours using Hagwilget Bridge facility or Old Kuldo hiking trail partnering with existing tour, cultural and accommodation-based operations such as 'Ksan, Grizzly River Adventures, Oldtown Adventures, Rediscovery Camp, Pinenut Creek cabins, guide/outfitter (Bruce Campbell), the Inlander, Lavender's B & B, the Gitxsan Cultural Heritage B & B and the Cataline Motel historic Old Town Gitanmaax reserve -- tourism economic development, human resources, campground, confluence of Bulkley and Skeena Rivers backcountry skiing – Hazelton Peak, Nine-Mile and Tommy Jack Pass trail from Four-Mile Bridge to Gitanmaax mountain biking – Silver Standard, Nine Mile Hospital Lake: hiking and horseback trails; wildlife viewing rafting: Kuldo to Hazelton docking facility on Skeena River in Hazelton Yukon Telegraph Trail rock climbing at Hagwilget Bridge wildlife viewing, especially bears in the Kuldo area	deteriorating infrastructure in Hazelton and 'Ksan deterioration of Hagwilget Bridge continued industrial logging on landbase, especially in Kuldo and Damsumlo areas Kemess connector mining road global recession uncertainty of aboriginal title creating poor investment climate establishment of non-local tourism businesses resulting in loss of local control over tourism industry

4.6.4 Gitxsan Watershed Administrative Unit 4: Bulkley



Unit number 10 represents the traditional territory claimed by the Gitanyow First Nation

HOUSE GROUP	CHIEF	SAMPLE OF FEATURES IN WATERSHED
Spookw	Steve Robinson	Stekyoden (Hagwilget Peak, Rocher Deboule) Blue Lakes Seeley Lake Provincial Park Seaton Ross Lake Provincial Park Rossvale Lake Natlan Creek Suskwa River Mt. Thoen Netalzul Bulkley River Canyon Hagwilget Bridge
Djogaslee (Axtu Dzeek)	Bruce Johnson	
Luutkudziiwus	Art Ridsdale	
Gyet'm Galdoo	Slyvester Green	

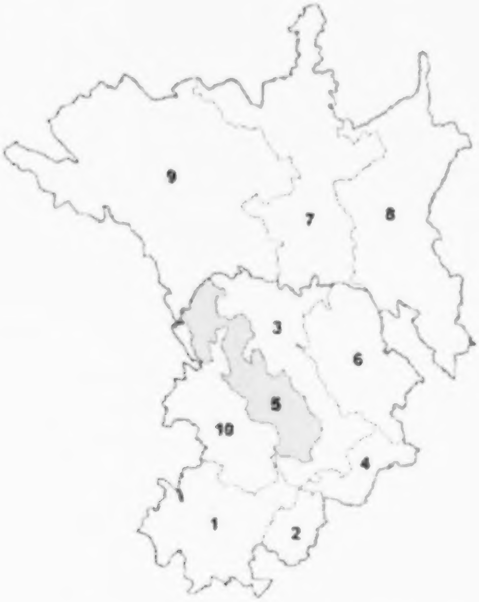
4.6.4.1 SWOT ANALYSIS

Lying within the Kispiox and Bulkley Forest Districts, the Bulkley watershed unit contains the dominant mountain peak in the area, Stekyoden (Hagwilget Peak) and the spectacular Bulkley River canyon.

Strengths	*Weaknesses*
Stekyoden Rocher Deboule Range trail infrastructure with a number of trails maintained by the Ministry of Forests including Blue Lakes, Station Creek and Thoen Basin not maintained trails include Chicago Creek & Netalzul Mountain campgrounds maintained by Forest Service in Suskwa River valley and by provincial parks at Seeley Lake Ross Lake for fishing, boating, hiking and swimming Hwy. 16 New Hazelton and Travel Info Centre Hagwilget Hwy. 62 Hagwilget Bridge Bulkley Canyon – rafting, kayaking, hiking, viewing Rossvale Lake trail Four-Mile fire lookout trail rock climbing and ice climbing	little in the way of interpretive signage along Hwy. 16 and 62 no train station in New Hazelton little in the form of Gitx̱san infrastructure on the landbase for tourism clearcut logging, urban and agricultural development removes pristine and wilderness experience for some, especially viewscape from Rocher Deboule range lack of trained Gitx̱san personnel in tourism inability to acquire capital for tourism infrastructure

Opportunities	*Threats*
Nine Mile-Itzul ATV and snowmobile route backcountry skiing Mt. Seaton and at Natlan Peak Babine grease trail Two-Mile to Suskwa mountain bike route multi-day hikes in Rocher Deboule range – i.e. Blue Lakes – Station Creek – Chicago Creek rock climbing: Stekyoden, Bulkley Gate, Suskwa ice climbing: Chicago Creek, China Creek Suskwa-Moricetown (Luno-Sharp-Seaton) high traverse berry picking New Hazelton: railway; bank robbery history partnering with existing operators such as Kitanga dogsledding, Nine Mile snowmobile club, motels in New Hazelton, Seeley Lake B & B Hagwilget Bridge site and Hagwilget reserve Hagwilget Bridge to One-Mile hiking trail Nichyeskwa connector road	deteriorating infrastructure: New Hazelton, Hwy. 16, Hwy. 62 and Hagwilget Bridge continued industrial logging on landbase, especially in Suskwa congestion and overuse, in particular Blue Lakes Trail global recession uncertainty of aboriginal title creating poor investment climate establishment of non-local tourism businesses resulting in loss of local control over tourism industry

4.6.5 Gitxsan Watershed Administrative Unit 5: Kispiox



Unit number 10 represents the traditional territory claimed by the Gitanyow First Nation

HOUSE GROUP	CHIEF	SAMPLE OF FEATURES IN WATERSHED
Antgulilbix	Brenda Stewart	Hazelton Peak Kispiox Mtn McCully Creek Kispiox River Date Creek Elizabeth Lake Sweetin River Kispiox Lake (headwaters) Stephen Lake Pentz Lake Mitten Lake Helen Lake Swan Lake/Kispiox River Provincial Park (part)
Antgulilbix (Tsii Baasa)	Brenda Stewart – Leonard Gawa	
Ma'uus	Jeff Harris	
Wii Eelast	Jim Angus	
Delgamuukw	Earl Muldoe	
Klyiiyem Lax Haa	Marvin Sampson	
Yagosip	Joyce Turner	
Gwii Yeehl	Chris Skulsh	
Gitludahl	Pete Muldoe	
Wii Mugulsxw	Art Wilson	
Geel (Aluuxw)	Walter Harris	
Geel (Dawamuxw)	Larry Patsey	

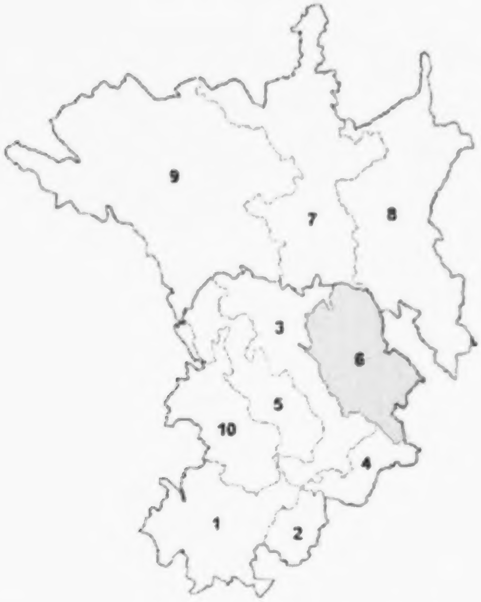
4.6.5.1 SWOT ANALYSIS

Lying within the Kispiox Forest District, the Kispiox watershed unit contains the Kispiox River valley, part of the recently designated Swan Lake/Kispiox River Provincial Park, many small lakes and the Gitxsan villages of Anspayaxw (Kispiox) and Sigit'ox (Glen Vowell).

Strengths	*Weaknesses*
campground and picnic area infrastructure (tent pads, picnic tables, pit privies, firewood, fire boxes, docks), many of which are maintained by the Forest Service, including Kispiox River, Elizabeth Lake and Pentz Lake, as well as Kispiox Band and private (River's Edge) extensive road network including Hwy. 49 (Kispiox Trail) and many smaller logging roads Anspayaxw (Kispiox Village): totems, fish hatchery, information centre Sigit'ox (Glen Vowell): architecture Moonlit Creek trail Date Creek demonstration forest pine mushrooms Kispiox Mountain Range Kispiox River many small lakes accommodation: Sportsmans Lodge, B & B's, fishing camps Kispiox Valley community grounds settler history wildlife local natural history knowledge held by Gitxsan and non-Gitxsan residents	extensive logging due to concentration of AAC in Kispiox River valley has removed the pristine wilderness experience for some and destroyed prime pine mushroom areas world reputation among sports fishers of Kispiox River has lead to overcrowding little in the form of Gitxsan infrastructure on the landbase for tourism lack of trained Gitxsan personnel in tourism inability to acquire capital for tourism infrastructure

Opportunities	*Threats*
cross country skiing capitalize on Upper Kispiox provincial park status in advertising cultural tours taking advantage of the historic grease trail system through the Upper Kispiox that connected with the Nass River through the Cranberry area lake activities, including watersports and lake fishing partnering with Kispiox Band and operators in Kispiox Valley horseback riding smokehouse activities hut-to-hut non-motorized product in Kispiox Mountain Range (Moonlit to Hazelton Peak) use of Date Creek demonstration forest for interpretive tours pine mushroom tours wildlife viewing, especially grizzly bears	logging developments may remove some of the backcountry strengths especially in the Kispiox Mountain Range and the Upper Kispiox Kispiox River system impacted by logging, beaver dams and commercial fishing on coast sport fisher overcrowding on Kispiox River may lead to further government regulation that doesn't have local tourism industry's best interests as focus deterioration of Forest Service campgrounds Kemess connector mining road further rural land development in the Kispiox Valley – subdivision of ALR land global recession uncertainty of aboriginal title creating poor investment climate establishment of non-local tourism businesses resulting in loss of local control over tourism industry, especially around land ownership in the Kispiox Valley

4.6.6 Gitxsan Watershed Administrative Unit 6: Babine



Unit number 10 represents the traditional territory claimed by the Gitanyow First Nation

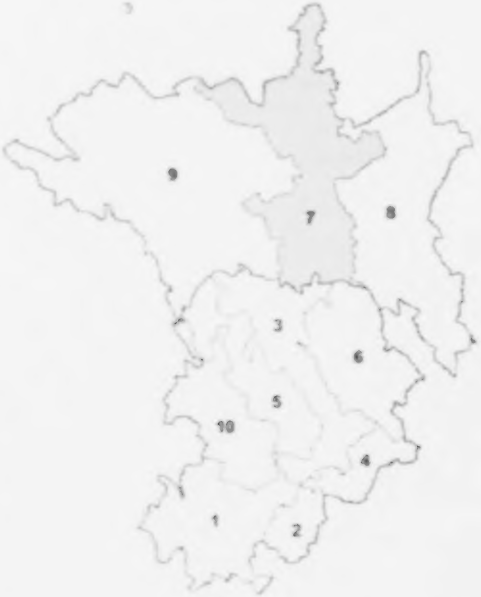
HOUSE GROUP	CHIEF	SAMPLE OF FEATURES IN WATERSHED
Djogaslee (Axtii Dzeek)	Bruce Johnson	Nilkitkwa River headwaters Gunanoot Lake Babine River Kisgegas village Shelagyote River Shedin River Sam Green Creek Shelf Ridge Atna Range Nichyeskwa River Gail Creek Thomlinson Creek Babine River Corridor Provincial Park
Nii Kyap	Gerald Gunanoot	
Wii Gyet	Lloyd Morrison	
Miluulak	Alice Jeffery	
Tsa Buk	Wilmer Johnson	
Wii Minosik	Larry Skulsh	
Wii Gaak	Neil B. Sterritt	

4.6.6.1 SWOT ANALYSIS

Lying within the Kispiox and Bulkley Forest Districts, the Babine watershed unit's dominant features include the Babine River, noted for it's rafting and fishery, the ancient Gitxsan village of Gisgegas and the glaciated Atna Mountain Range.

Strengths	*Weaknesses*
east and west sides of watershed accessible by road but large parts of watershed unit, especially northeast, are unroaded Babine River: fishing, rafting, Babine River Corridor Provincial Park, petroglyphs wildlife viewing, especially grizzlies in the Babine River corridor Gisgegas village: infrastructure and cultural history Shedin River-Shelf Ridge ancient trail system Gisgegas -Atna Range ancient trail system and snowmobile route inland fishery at Gisgegas	lack of tourism infrastructure on the landbase, especially Gitxsan controlled lack of trained Gitxsan personnel in tourism inability to acquire capital for tourism infrastructure relatively long access by road from population centres ancient trail systems in need of repair for tourism capability
Opportunities	***Threats***
Gisgegas village: cultural history, accommodation, activities, petroglyphs traditional fishing activities hut-to-hut trek, Gisgegas -Kuldo village along Shelf Ridge (ancient trail) backcountry tours into the Atna Range Nichyeskwa connector road partnering with existing rafting and sport fishing operators cultural history around Gunanoot Lake	logging development, especially north of Babine River and along Shedin and Sam Green Creeks habitat destruction and road access affecting grizzly population overuse of Babine River corridor for rafting and kayaking detracts from experience and results in environmental damage at few suitable camping spots Nichyeskwa connector road global recession uncertainty of aboriginal title creating poor investment climate establishment of non-local tourism businesses resulting in loss of local control over tourism industry, especially around sport fishing and rafting

4.6.7 Gitxsan Watershed Administrative Unit 7: Upper Skeena



Unit number 10 represents the traditional territory claimed by the Gitanyow First Nation

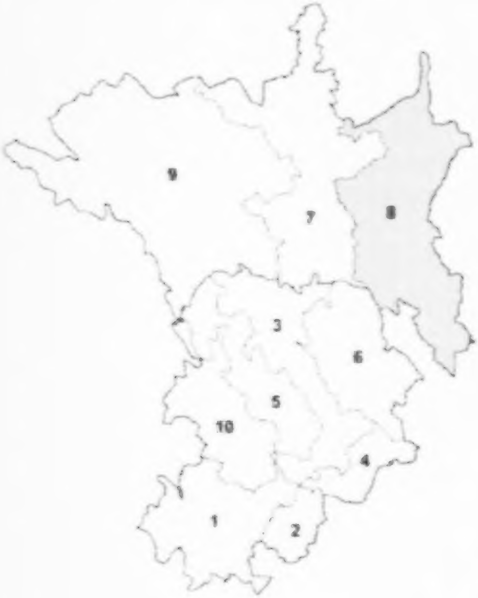
HOUSE GROUP	CHIEF	SAMPLE OF FEATURES IN WATERSHED
Gwinin Nitxw	Solomon Jack	Sicintine River Sicintine Range Tommy Jack Pass Slamgeesh River Duti River Groundhog Range Atna Range Tatlatui Range Skeena River
Wii Minosik	Larry Skulsh	
Wii Gyet	Lloyd Morrison	
Wii Gaak	Neil B. Sterritt	
Geel	Walter Harris	
Miluulak (Xsemgitgigeenix)	Alice Jeffery	
Nii Kyap	Gerald Gunanoot	

4.6.7.1 SWOT ANALYSIS

Lying within the Kispiox and Fort St. James Forest Districts, the Upper Skeena watershed unit contains a lengthy wilderness section of the Skeena River main stem and the ancient Gitxsan village site of Gitangasx.

Strengths	*Weaknesses*
wilderness roaded access to Tommy Jack Pass BC Rail line and railway bed along Skeena River Chipmunk and Mosque airstrips confluence of Sicintine and Skeena Rivers Slamgeesh River guide camp infrastructure Skeena River Atna Range Yukon Telegraph Trail	difficult access little infrastructure lack of trained Gitxsan personnel in tourism inability to acquire capital for tourism infrastructure
Opportunities	***Threats***
road through Tommy Jack Pass creates backcountry alpine and glacier opportunities in the Atna Range, especially in winter with backcountry skiing and snowmobiling large, intact section of the Yukon Telegraph Trail along north side of Skeena River and heading up the Slamgeesh River high suitability for cultural tourism at ancient village of Gitangasx, along traditional trails north through Slamgeesh to Kluatantan, and at confluence of Sicintine and Skeena Rivers wilderness rafting on upper reaches of Skeena River partnerships with existing and new operators such as guide/outfitters (i.e. Bruce Campbell, Ron Flemming) and Gwininnitxw Economic Development Society Kemess connector road	logging will destroy wilderness experience – Tommy Jack Creek, Sicintine River and Upper Skeena planned bridge crossings of the Skeena River Kemess connector road global recession uncertainty of aboriginal title creating poor investment climate establishment of non-local tourism businesses resulting in loss of local control over tourism industry, especially around sport fishing and rafting

4.6.8 Gitxsan Watershed Administrative Unit 8: Sustut



Unit number 10 represents the traditional territory claimed by the Gitanyow First Nation

HOUSE GROUP	CHIEF	SAMPLE OF FEATURES IN WATERSHED
Nii Kyap	Gerald Gunanoot	Bear Lake Bear River Sustut River Kotsine River Thutade Lake BCR line Sicintine headwaters Shelagyote headwaters Driftwood headwaters Skeena River
Nii Kyap (O'yee)	Gerald Gunanoot	
Miluulak	Alice Jeffery	
Tsa Buk	Wilmer Johnson	
Wii Gaak	Neil B. Sterritt	
Haiwas	Gloria Wilson	

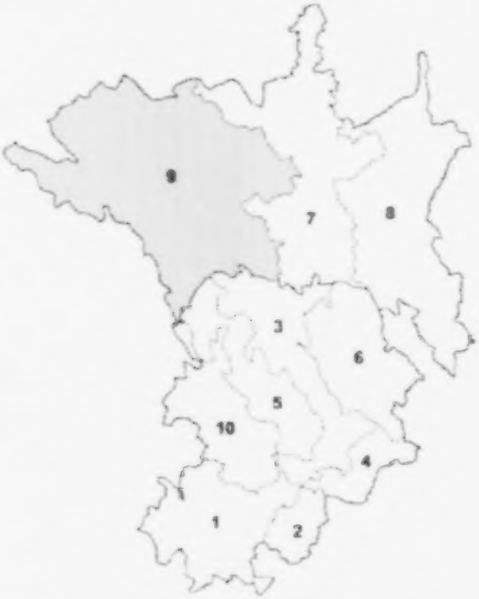
4.6.8.1 SWOT ANALYSIS

Lying within the Mackenzie and Fort St. James Forest Districts, the Sustut watershed unit contains extensive wilderness and is dominated by two major water bodies, Bear Lake and Thutade Lake, and the extremely productive Sustut River. It also belongs to three great watersheds – the Mackenzie, Skeena and Fraser Rivers.

Strengths	*Weaknesses*
wilderness, with only the eastern sections accessible by road Bear Lake infrastructure and ancient Gitxsan settlement confluence of Sustut River and Birdflat Creek BC Rail line Kotsine falls airstrips: Minaret, Squingula, Meathole and Bear guide camps, outfitter cabins, fishing lodges Sustut River Skeena River Thutade Lake Sicintine Range	inaccessible or very expensive/difficult access long distance from any population centre little infrastructure lack of trained Gitxsan personnel in tourism inability to acquire capital for tourism infrastructure

Opportunities	*Threats*
Bear Lake Gitxsan cultural history and infrastructure plus Fort Connelly areas of high cultural tourism suitability at Birdflat Creek and Sustut River ancient trail from Bear Lake to Gisgegas Minaret camp Sustut River wilderness rafting on Upper Skeena BC Rail railway bed many partnership possibilities with existing operators including Suskeena Lodge, Driftwood Valley Outfitters, Bear River Lodge, Sustut Valhalla Lodge Kemess connector road	logging and forestry road construction impacting wilderness experience especially along south side of Sustut River from Bear River to Skeena and north along Skeena River from confluence with Sustut Kemess connector road global recession uncertainty of aboriginal title creating poor investment climate establishment of non-local tourism businesses resulting in loss of local control over tourism industry, especially around guiding and sport fishing

4.6.9 Gitxsan Watershed Administrative Unit 9: Nass



Unit number 10 represents the traditional territory claimed by the Gitanyow First Nation

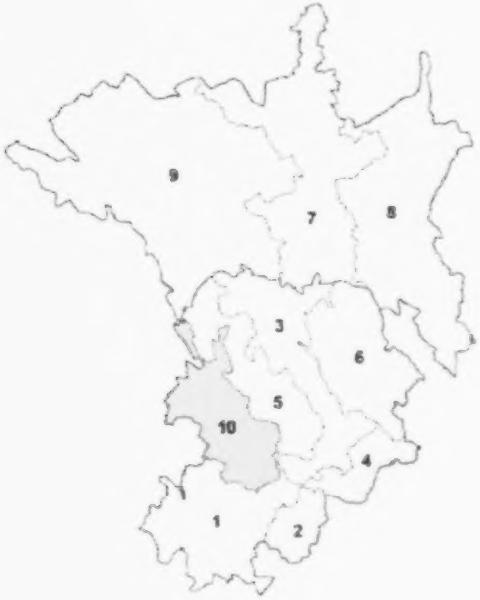
HOUSE GROUP	CHIEF	SAMPLE OF FEATURES IN WATERSHED
Delgamuukw	Earl Muldoe	Canyon Creek-Canyon Lake-Vile Creek Kwinageese Lake Fred Wright Lake Taylor River Nass River Blackwater Mtn. Damdochax Lake Groundhog Pass Oweegee Lake Bell Irving River Bowser Lake Hwy 37 ancient Gitxsan village sites of Gitwinhlt'uutsxwhl'aks and Ts'im'anluuskeexs
Gyologyet	Mary McKenzie	
Wii Goob'l	Charlotte Sullivan	
Baskelaxha	Bill Blackwater	
Luus	Roy Wilson	
Wii Minosik	Larry Skulsh	
Klyiiyem Lax Haa	Marvin Sampson	
Niist	David Blackwater	
Skiikm Laxha	Johnny Wilson	
Djogaslee	Ted Mowatt	

4.6.9.1 SWOT ANALYSIS

Lying within the Fort St. James, Kalum and Kispiox Forest Districts, the Nass watershed unit contains a large part of the upper Nass River drainage in a largely wilderness setting.

Strengths	*Weaknesses*
wilderness Hwy. 37 access to western part of watershed unit Nass River Vile Crk.-Canyon Lake-Canyon Creek Yukon Telegraph Trail ancient grease trails Damdochax Lake Bowser Lake guide/outfitter infrastructure – Ken Balfour Bonney Lake forest service campground Bell II Last Frontier heliskiing lodge	largely inaccessible or very difficult and expensive access little in the way of Gitx̱san tourism infrastructure no interpretive highway signage along Hwy. 37 stretch in watershed unit clearcut logging along Hwy. 37 from Bell Creek to Oweegee Lake long distance from population centres lack of trained Gitx̱san personnel in tourism inability to acquire capital for tourism infrastructure condition of ancient trails not up to tourism-use standards
Opportunities	***Threats***
wildlife viewing, especially bears in the Kwinageese-Fred Wright Lakes area lake fishing areas of high cultural tourism suitability around Blackwater Lake (site of ancient Gitx̱san settlement of Gitwinhlt'uutsxwhl'aks) Yukon Telegraph Trail ancient grease trail from Nass to Skeena watersheds through Canyon Lake trade route trails north from Blackwater Lake through Groundhog Pass Hwy. 37 tourism traffic partnerships with existing operators such as guide/outfitter Ken Balfour and Last Frontier heliskiing Kemess connector road	logging and road access destroying wilderness experience and ancient trails, especially in Taylor River, Kwinageese and Vile Creek areas Kemess connector road mining development in Bowser basin global recession uncertainty of aboriginal title creating poor investment climate establishment of non-local tourism businesses resulting in loss of local control over tourism industry

4.7 Gitanyow Study Unit: Unit 10



This study unit is home to the Gitanyow First Nations, lies outside of the Gitxsan Area of Interest yet falls within the Kispiox Forest District area. The community of Gitanyow lies east and north of the Skeena and Kitwanga River, about 110 km from Terrace,

The Gitanyow were known as the "awesome warrior people" and respectively as the "people of a small village". The village, known as Gitanyow and named after a former chief, also goes by the Western name Kitwancool. The Gitanyow share a strong bond with the Gitxsan – their neighbours to the south and east, sharing a common language, culture, tradition and kinship. In the centuries leading up to the present they have seen their numbers decimated by smallpox and other diseases. Prior to the ravages of disease, population loss resulted from an extensive war that was waged against the Tsetsaut. An Athapascan (interior) people, the Tsetsaut displacement from the east resulted in conflict with the Gitanyow and Gitxsan peoples along the traditional territories northern border.

4.7.1.1 GITANYOW HISTORIC VILLAGE PROJECT

The Gitanyow Historic Village Project is a multi-year community development project that is designed to meet a variety of Gitanyow community needs. When complete, the Gitanyow historic village site will be a showcase for Gitanyow culture and traditions. The project is designed to diversify the Gitanyow economy by providing opportunities for cultural tourism and new cottage industries. The village site, which contains the largest number of standing Gyetim Gan (totem poles) in the Northwest, already serves as a major attraction for visitors traveling the Highway 37 corridor.

Phase One of this project (now completed) consisted of building a 2,880 square foot longhouse style building containing a Tourism Information office, a small Museum and Performers Area to provide a culturally appropriate venue for staging performances such as dance, music and storytelling.

Phase Two (at the funding proposal stage) will develop the grounds to allow for parking, fencing the perimeter, developing walkways & picnic sites, relocating the poles to their original locations and developing interpretive centres for the poles and specific archaeological sites. This phase of the project also calls for the construction of a carving shed which will allow better protection for twelve very old poles presently stored in an old building on the site. The construction of a pavilion for outdoor entertainment and meetings, as well as development of the Kitwanga River frontage – will enhance peoples knowledge and experience of Gitanyow culture.

The report (internal use only) entitled Gitanyow Economic Analysis of the Seven Sites and Community Economic Development Strategy of March 2001 recommends that Gitanyow undertake a long-term program to develop cultural tourism initiatives[22]. The planned Gitanyow Historic Village project would serve as a cornerstone for this development.

4.7.1.2 GITWANGAK TOURISM WORKSHOP

Gitwangak is located at the junction of Highways 16 & 37 (north). While this area falls within the Gitxsan Adminitrative Unit 1 (West Skeena), and is not part of the Gitanyow First Nation – it is a very strategic tourism junction with immediate and direct linkages to tourism opportunities within and around the Gitanyow First Nation.

Due to the strategic importance of this highway junction, a tourism workshop was facilitated[23]. At this workshop, nine local tourism stakeholders got together to discuss the various tourism opportunities and associated constraints to tourism development in this general area. The results of this workshop are applicable to the Gitwangak & Gitanyow geographic areas and are summarized in the following chart (Exhibit 12).

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[22] Cited in: Gitanyow Historic Village Project: Two Year Development Proposal, Sandra Littlewood, March 2001.

[23] March 6th, 2001

Exhibit 12: Gitwangak Tourism Workshop Results

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES: GITWANGAK

Primary opportunity is High levels of traffic on Highway 37 and Highway 16

Many Highway 37 travellers stay at RV Park and separate community campground in Kitwanga, aside from potential use of Kitwanga and Skeena Rivers, little interest in other parts of the land base.

Suggested a number of ways of keeping people in town a bit longer including:

constructing a walking trail between campgrounds, along Ducks Unlimited pond project, to National Historic sites, to cemetery, to the Kitwanga River, to the store

constructing a community playground to get highway travelers to stop

potential activities that travelers might participate in included fishing, bike riding on area trails, using a picnic shelter, rafting and tubing on the Kitwanga River, 1st nations activities, a salmon bake

construct a walking trail between Kitwanga and the Skeena River along the Kitwanga River, this would allow travelers to get away from the highway for half a day, an easy trail mostly downhill, could be associated with 1st nations activities, including interpretive signs

Suggested sleeping in traditional longhouse as alternative to camping grounds

Regarding highway traffic, suggested finding scenic viewpoints where travelers stop anyway and either developing them as tourist attractions or using them as communication points to make travelers aware of tourism opportunities locally.

Suggest a great opportunity for developing a campground, tourist facility at Kitwancool Lake, however there are 1st Nations/land claims issues involved. High levels of regional camping and boating at the lake but no facilities.

Rafting/tubing is a popular local activity on the Kitwanga River between Kitwanga and the Cedarvale backroad bridge which is a short distance above the confluence of the Kitwanga and Skeena Rivers. Reported to have lots of stopping areas, also fossils in the area, easy travel, not hazardous except for windfall and sweepers which can be a problem from time to time.

Suggested interest in developing tourism event – particularly something motorized that other communities might feel is not environmentally sensitive.

Community interest in old overgrown forest roads in the local area for ATV, snowmobile, horse use and cross country skiing.

Airport at Woodcock, across the Skeena from Cedarvale, used to be used for parachute club but no longer the case. One local business is setting up to take riders up on a powered chute from a location on the edge of Kitwanga townsite.

Discussed cooperative projects with 1st nations. One person is examining the possibility of commissioning 1st nations designs by local artists and licensing that work for tourist souvenirs.

It was mentioned that several 1st nations students have participated in an Economic Development program produced by the Nicola Valley College in Merritt and that those students might provided an opportunity for local residents to develop some joint tourism based projects.

Widely recognized by group at meeting that there would be great benefits to a 1st nations component to any tourism project.

Other ideas presented

Youth Hostels along Highway 37 to the Yukon

Tap into via rail tours/ Prince Rupert Cruise ships

Developing a "gateway to the Yukon" concept

Mountain bike rentals

4x4 tours of backroads, to scenic viewpoints

Guided trips for edible mushroom hunting

Floating the Skeena from Ksan to Hazelton, no whitewater, good family trip, great potential to tie to 1st nations

CONSTRAINTS TO TOURISM DEVELOPMENT: GITWANGAK

How do I do it? – starting & running a tourism business?
Doing it by yourself is tough
Don't know how to get funding
There are no overnight accommodations in Kitwanga except the campgrounds (B&B opportunity)
Lack of confidence associated with economic downturn
No demonstrated successful tourism businesses
Larger communities more likely to get available funding for projects
No sewer/ water infrastructure locally
No good eating place
Some kinds funding easy to obtain if "unemployed" not available if previously self-employed
MOF and Parks not maintaining trails in the area which could be used for tourism
Land claims across the area, create reluctance to try new activities on the land base
Evident mistrust of government motives and red-tape
Would like funding for a tourism booth

Chapter

5

5 Land Use Planning and Resource Management in the Study Area

During the final stages of preparing this document, an election was held in the province resulting in the creation of a new government. In June 2001, the new provincial government announced a significant reorganization of government ministries. The Ministry of Small Business, Tourism & Culture (MSBTC) was eliminated with the ministries' major tourism functions being transferred into two new Ministries – the Ministry of Competition, Science & Enterprise and the Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management.

The new **Ministry of Competition, Science and Enterprise** (MCSE) will be the primary ministry responsible for tourism development, led by Minister Rick Thorpe and Deputy Minister Donald Leitch. MCSE will be responsible for Tourism BC, PavCo, and the Vancouver Trade and Convention Centre. MCSE *"brings together government programs dedicated to building a more competitive business climate, particularly in the key industries of technology, science and tourism."* MCSE will be primarily responsible for the development of government policies regarding general tourism sector development and management.

The new **Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management** (MSRM), led by Minister Stan Hagen and Deputy Minister Jon O'Riordan, will be responsible for leading all strategic land, water and resource allocation planning (including tourism land use) as well consolidating all land and water tenures in the province. In creating MSRM, the government consolidated the strategic land and resource planning functions and personnel of the various resource ministries (including former MSBTC tourism land use planners) into one ministry. A key priority of MSRM is to provide faster approvals and greater access to Crown land and resources to protect and create jobs in forestry, tourism, mining, farming, ranging and oil & gas production.

Some of the details and implications of this government ministry reorganization were still unclear at the time of this document's publication. However, the following information was the most recent information available.

5.1 Land Use Planning and Tourism[24]

Historically, tourism planning in BC has occurred at the senior government and the local government levels. Senior governments have been involved primarily with issues concerning research, marketing, human resources and, to a lesser extent, capital. For the provincial government, marketing has been the primary tool for assisting tourism development in the province. Local governments and communities have worked with the tourism sector mostly through the provision of municipal services and infrastructure, but over the last 10 years there has been increasing use of economic development and tourism development planning to stimulate activity and expand the taxation base. In amongst these efforts to promote tourism, there have been some obvious development gaps which have exacerbated in recent years as the tourism industry and the markets it serves mature and become increasingly more sophisticated.

Some of the more significant gaps relate specifically to tourism's role in the Crown land use planning process and Crown land management regime. Historically, that role has been extremely limited, confined mostly to tenure issuance for consumptive activities such as fishing and hunting (i.e. guide outfitting). As the ownership and administration of Crown lands in Canada is mostly controlled by the provinces, provincial land managers effectively decide who uses Crown land and resources and for what purpose.[25] In BC, there is a variety of legislation governing land use, but the *Forest Act*, *Land Act*, *Mineral Tenure Act* and *Range Act* cover the vast majority of activity. Controlling ministries include the Ministry of Forests, BC Assets & Lands (BCAL) and Water, Land & Air Protection (formerly the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks). Tourism interests are not represented in any of the above acts and none of the above ministries have tourism mandates. Multiple-use concepts have been articulated within strategic level language but not embodied in actual land management practices. The former Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture had no control over Crown land use and they have not historically maintained any tourism offices outside of Vancouver and Victoria. The result of the above factors is an absence of tourism representation within both the land use planning process and land management practice[26].

Tourism development in BC is expanding at rates well beyond overall economic growth rates. An increasing part of the industry is oriented to outdoor recreation products that rely in large part on access to the Crown land and resource base. The importance of Crown land to tourism industry development is seen in literature produced by the Council of Tourism Associations of British Columbia (COTA). At the annual BC Tourism Industry Conference held in February 2000, the industry ranked land use and marketing as the two top issues of concern for tourism in the province. Land use planning that values tourism interests, involvement of tourism interests in land use decisions, the availability of Crown land for purchase and tenure and relations between tourism and the forest industry were some of the issues considered important in COTA's most recent membership survey.[27]

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[24] Planning and governance for "tourism" in the Province of BC is presently in a state of flux due to the complete re-organization of the provincial cabinet and line agencies.

[25] The federal government exercises some control in the areas of environmental impacts, fisheries, migratory species, navigation and shipping, and transboundary movement of resource products. The British North America Act vested the ownership of natural resources with the provinces.

[26] Tourism land use planning resources have been moved to the new Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management.

Some progress has been made in recent years to improve tourism representation in the land use decision-making process. The Land and Resource Management Planning (LRMP) process has at least created a forum for discussing multiple use and sustainability concepts and tourism's possible role The Tourism Opportunity Strategy (TOS) is a further step to sound land use because they profile the current status of local tourism development, provide detailed information required for sub-regional or community level planning, and can be used to identify, develop and promote appropriate, sustainable tourism development opportunities.

5.2 Ecotourism and Adventure Travel Strategy for British Columbia

Ecotourism and adventure travel is one of the fastest growing sectors of BC's tourism industry. An expanding market of knowledgeable travellers is looking for spectacular settings and challenging activities. This strategy lays out a role for the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture, and the provincial Government generally, in fostering growth in the ecotourism and adventure travel sector while ensuring benefit to communities and resources that the industry depends on. Canada still accounts for only a fraction of the North American ecotourism and adventure travel market. Despite the recent growth in ecotourism and adventure travel in British Columbia, there is considerable room for growth of the industry.

Entrepreneurs and communities play a leading role in expanding the ecotourism and adventure travel industry. Government, however, has a unique and important role in fostering this growth. This role includes: strategic investments to create new opportunities; promotion of high standards of quality practice; and establishment of regulatory and tax regimes that maintain the vigour of the industry.

Ecotourism and adventure travel can make a positive contribution to community economic development and diversification. But care needs to be taken that growth in this sector does not harm host communities or the resource base.

The ecotourism and adventure travel industry is dynamic and innovative; products evolve continuously in response to a demanding and competitive market. This situation challenges Government to develop regulations that protect sensitive resources without unnecessarily impeding the industry. Wherever possible, regulation and resource protection should be developed and implemented cooperatively by industry, Government, and host communities. Industry-led codes of practice, community involvement, and local recreation planning can help to maximize benefits to each sector.

Ecotourism and adventure travel products are closely linked to other tourism sectors. This sector addresses the core of British Columbia's "Super, Natural" image. Many of the images and stories that promote tourism in British Columbia refer to ecotourism and suggest that visitors who do not participate in ecotourism and adventure travel often vicariously share these experiences.

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[27] TREK International Inc., 2000, COTA Membership Survey Results: Land Use Issues October/November 2000, Council of Tourism Associations of BC.

5.3 Tourism and Crown-Land Management

Several ministries and agencies of the Provincial Government of British Columbia that focus on resource management play a major to minor role in tourism[28]. Understanding of their mandates and the nature and extent of their roles in tourism, particularly as they relate to the pursuit of tourism opportunities in the study area, will assist in assigning responsibilities to the required actions to pursue the short listed opportunities in the tourism action plan at the end of this document. To that end, summarized below are their respective mandates and roles in planning, reviewing, approving and/or regulating backcountry and commercial recreation, including tourism.

5.3.1 Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management

The new Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management (MSRM), is responsible for leading all strategic level land & water planning as well as all resource allocation planning in the province. Therefore MSRM is responsible for the completion of larger-scale strategic land, water and resource plans (e.g. Land & Resource Management Plans); as well as leading the development of smaller-scale strategic landscape level planning to implement completed CORE Plans and LRMPs.

In creating MSRM, the government consolidated the strategic land and resource planning functions and personnel of various resource ministries (including former MSBTC tourism land use planners) into one ministry. A key priority of MSRM is to provide faster approvals and greater access to Crown land and resources to protect and create jobs in forestry, tourism, mining, farming, ranging and oil & gas production.

Therefore it is anticipated that MSRM will play a role in ensuring that strategic level plans recognize the land and resource issues of the tourism sector; and that the tourism sector has access to the crown land and resources necessary for sector expansion. The actual tenuring and management of crown land and resources for tourism and commercial recreation remains with Land and Water British Columba Inc.

5.3.2 Land and Water British Columbia Inc.

Land and Water British Columbia Inc. (LWBC) is a specialized agency of the provincial government that reports to the Minister Responsible for Sustainable Resource Management. Its mandate is to make Crown land and assets available for environmentally responsible economic growth and public benefit. It does this through responsible development, marketing and leasing of Crown land for residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural and recreational use. Commercial recreation is recognized by LWBC as important to economic diversification and rural development across British Columbia. With 92% of land in the province held by the Crown, LWBC's responsibility is significant.

Since October 1998, LWBC has been the provincial agency charged with the responsibility of managing commercial recreation on Crown Lands. LWBC's aim is to proactively manage commercial recreation activities and development opportunities. In addition to higher-level policies, LWBC has a *Commercial Recreation on Crown Land Policy* (approved and implemented May 1998) to guide management of commercial recreation activities. The goal of this policy is to maintain "an environment that is naturally diverse and healthy, and enriches peoples lives."

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[28] This governance structure in BC has recently undergone a complete reorganization due to a new Liberal government succeeding to power. Line agency mandates and responsibilities have changed significantly and the reader is advised to check with their local Government Agent's office for new mandates and responsibilities.

Strategic principles guiding BCAL's Commercial Recreation Policy are as follows:

Relationship with First Nations – Provide economic development opportunities for First Nations, and consult with First Nations on commercial recreation proposals, consistent with provincial and ministry guidelines with respect to aboriginal rights and title.

Environmental Stewardship – Protect and maintain environmental integrity, using land and resources within their capacity to sustain use, and maintain biological diversity.

Public Access and Use – Maintain public access to enter and traverse Crown land as a primary consideration in evaluating proposals for commercial recreation. As a general guide, legitimate reasons to manage public access may include the potential for conflict, environmental, and public safety concerns. An additional principle is to provide a balanced mix of recreational experiences, both commercial and non-commercial in nature.

Business Certainty – Ensure that new commercial recreation applications are compatible with the operational needs of existing commercial recreation businesses.

Economic Diversification – Provide for an environmentally sustainable, responsive and vibrant commercial recreation industry. Ensure that commercial recreation operations are considered as integral parts of diversification strategies for communities and regions in transition.

Public Consultation – Involve other interests through a fair, open and consultative process which takes into account locally-established priorities, and public interests, while not fettering the Minister's ultimate decision-making authority.

Inter-agency Co-ordination – Manage Crown lands in an integrated, co-operative and open manner, with involvement from provincial government agencies, local governments, First Nations and the public. Where they exist, use agreements between agencies to develop government responses to commercial recreation proposals. In addition, consider all government commitments for resource use during the review of commercial recreation proposals.

Land Use Planning – Ensure that land allocation decisions are consistent with approved local, regional and provincial land use plans, including strategic plans such as Land and Resource Management Plans, Local Resource Use Plans and local government plans, with special consideration to commercial recreation values identified in these plans.

The Province's Commercial Recreation Policy applies to all forms of outdoor recreation activities authorized by LWBC to be carried out on provincial Crown land on a fee-for-service basis (some exceptions do apply). Such activities include commercial/mechanized ski guiding, commercial hunting and fishing and other commercial recreation activities requiring physical improvements. The policy does not pertain to incidental commercial use of Crown land; commercial recreation activities undertaken within a provincial park, recreation area or protected area (this requires permits through BC Parks) or commercial alpine developments (subject to the Commercial Alpine Ski Policy). Protocols are in place between LWBC, the Ministry of Forests and the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks with respect to the approval and adjudication of commercial recreation use proposals for Crown land or activities crossing park or recreation area boundaries into crown land. Public recreation uses of a non-commercial nature proposed for provincial forests are approved by the Ministry of Forests.

The Land Act requires all businesses using Crown Land to be licensed. LWBC must provide commercial recreation operators with permits that give them clearly defined rights to use Crown Land, thereby giving local industry a greater degree of certainty. The licenses, permits and leases granted reflect the classification of the commercial recreation activity: short term investigative uses require investigative use permits, short term low impact uses require temporary permits, long term uses of extensive areas require licenses of occupation, and long term site specific uses require leases. Sets out in the policy document for each of the classified activities are the rights granted, applicability, term, pricing structure, client requirements and responsibilities.

At the same time, tenuring and management of Crown land for commercial recreation must be consistent with approved local, regional and provincial land use plans and recreation management plans.

LWBC's approval process allows time for each application to be reviewed by provincial ministries such as the Ministry of Forests and the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection. Local interest groups also provide feedback before LWBC makes a decision. LWBC understands that working co-operatively with other agencies and community groups will help to speed up the referral input and overall application procedure.

5.3.3 Ministry of Water, Land & Air Protection

The Ministry of Water, Land & Air Protection (MWLAP – formerly MELP) has responsibility across British Columbia for the management, protection and enhancement of the province's environment, including its wildlife, water, land and air resources, its Crown land and its provincial parks, recreation areas and ecological reserves.

BC Parks is the agency responsible under the Ministry for the management of all matters concerning the park system, including maintenance of the provincial park system's campground and trail infrastructure and determining and overseeing appropriate commercial recreation tourism activities in the parks. The purpose of commercial recreation services within parks is to provide park visitors with an opportunity to appreciate the natural and cultural heritage of BC Parks. Appropriate commercially delivered recreation services widen the range of opportunities available to all park visitors. The preservation of park heritage values takes precedence over the provision of recreational opportunities. All services provided by the private sector within a provincial park must be consistent with the approved objectives of that park.

An appropriate commercial opportunity is one which has traditionally been conducted in the park system and/or is deemed compatible with BC Park's values. It allows a park visitor to appreciate the attributes and features of a park in a manner approved by the park management plan and/or park objectives. The opportunity and how it is provided must not conflict with the stewardship mandate of BC Parks, and should take into consideration potential impacts on the park environment and other park visitors. If an opportunity new to the park area is being considered, management may test the appropriateness, the public perception to, and the environmental impact of a service prior to decision of whether or not to issue a proposal package for the opportunity.

When the private sector is invited to provide services to the public in provincial parks, it must result in the maintenance or enhancement of recreational opportunities. Such invitations will be given appropriate public visibility. Exclusive commercial recreation opportunities will be competed for, usually through a proposal call process.

Park management may respond to unsolicited proposals for the commercial delivery of a recreational opportunity by determining, with solicited input where needed, the appropriateness of the proposed recreation opportunity and the commercial delivery of it. The decision will take into account the type of activity, size of operation, anticipated impacts, the existence of previous requests from other proponents, the existence of competing businesses both within and outside of the park offering similar services, and directions provided through a management plan.

In recognition of the actual and potential impact of park based commercial recreation operations on other agencies and/or interests outside, BC Parks will cooperate with BC Assets and Lands Corporation, National Parks, Provincial Governments, First Nations, various interest groups, corporations, agencies and individuals to achieve park objectives.

Many of the protected areas are available, in principle and where appropriate, for commercial tourism and recreation. These development opportunities will be developed during area-specific management planning, which will also recognize the protection of the special natural values of each area and the provision for public non-commercial recreation.

5.3.4 Ministry of Forests

The mandate of the Ministry of Forests (MoF) is to plan and manage the timber resource to ensure economic and social benefits for the province, immediate to long term. This includes managing, protecting and conserving the forest resources and their recreation values. The recreation program of the Ministry of Forests has a two-fold mission: to provide the opportunity for recreation experiences and benefits by protecting the recreation resource, and to manage the use of the recreation resource. This mission extends to the Crown lands of the province outside parks and settled areas.

This mission is carried out within the context of the Ministry's overall integrated resource management mandate and in cooperation with the recreation programs of other government agencies, public groups and the private sector. The Provincial Forest recreation resource encompasses the full spectrum of recreation values and opportunities, including scenic landscapes, wilderness, cultural and heritage landmarks, and developed recreation facilities.

The Ministry's Recreation Program's goals are threefold. First, to identify, protect and manage the Provincial Forest recreation resource by:

- maintaining an inventory of the recreation resource

- assessing the use, demand and value of forest recreation
- ensuring that recreation (including landscape and wilderness) values are considered in resource management decisions

Second, to manage the public's use of the Provincial Forest recreation resource by:

- developing and maintaining a network of recreation sites and trails
- educating and informing the public about recreation opportunities and the impact of recreation use on other forest resources
- enforcing recreation management policy and procedures

Third, to retain or enhance forest landscape values in keeping with the concepts and principles of integrated resource management by:

- identifying, classifying and recording visual resources and values
- identifying desirable or acceptable levels of landscape alteration
- establishing visual quality objectives for managing visual resources and values
- developing design solutions for meeting visual quality objectives

In terms of Land Use Planning, Ministry of Forests staff are actively involved in the land use studies and plans being prepared within the Kispiox Forest District. Regional staff are members of the Inter-Agency Planning Team for the Sub-Regional Planning processes.

5.3.5 BC Fisheries

BC Fisheries, in the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, has direct responsibility for the management of the freshwater recreation fisheries, aquaculture activities, marine plant harvesting and for the regulation, sale, inspection and processing of fish. The province also exercises delegated authority under the federal Fisheries Act for the management of the non-salmon freshwater fisheries and wild oyster harvest. The goal of the provincial Fisheries program is to conserve the natural diversity of fish and fish habitat and to sustainably manage freshwater sport fishing in BC.

5.3.6 Tourism British Columbia

The mandate of Tourism BC, an independent Crown corporation, has three dimensions: to promote development and growth of the tourism industry, to increase and distribute revenues and employment across the province and to increase the economic benefits of this industry to all residents of British Columbia. It pursues this mandate along several streams – marketing and sales, visitor information services, accommodation services and standards, education and training, research, and business development. Tourism BC has offices in Victoria and Vancouver. It works in partnership with the Northern British Columbia Tourism Association and the regional Visitor InfoCentres.

5.3.7 British Columbia Environmental Assessment Office

Subject to legislation, the Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) is the provincial agency responsible for coordinating assessment of the impacts of major development proposals in the province. Sectors for which it undertakes such assessments are broad and include tourism. The purpose of the review process is to identify any foreseeable adverse short or long term impacts of a development proposal from environmental, economic, social, cultural, heritage and health perspectives; to then determine ways to eliminate, minimize or mitigate them; and to then make recommendations to grant or refuse a project approval certificate. The Minister of the Environment, Lands and Parks and a second appropriate minister, then makes consideration of and decision on the recommendations.

5.4 Regional Land Use Planning

5.4.1 Kispiox Land and Resource Management Plan

The Kispiox Land and Resource Management Plan (KLRMP) is a sub-regional plan comprised of approximately 1.1 million hectares in Northwestern British Columbia. The planning area includes the communities of the Hazeltons, Kispiox, Kitseguecla, Kitwanga, Gitwangak, and Gitanyow. The LRMP process was initiated in 1989 and completed in 1995, with the exception of the Upper Kispiox and Seven Sisters areas where planning was deferred. Cabinet approved the plan in April 1996. The objectives in the LRMP became a higher level plan under the *Forest Practices Code Act of British Columbia* in January 1997. In 1997, consensus was reached on plans for the deferred areas in the Upper Kispiox and Seven Sisters areas. Cabinet approved these plans in 1999. The process to establish the objectives for the Upper Kispiox and the Seven Sisters areas as higher level plans is currently underway.

The KLRMP provides resource users with objectives, strategies and zones to guide the sustainable use of provincial Crown land and resources within the Kispiox planning area. The purpose of implementation monitoring is to ensure that that the KLRMP is implemented in accordance with its management direction and intent. Effectiveness monitoring will be used to determine if the desired outcomes are achieved with respect to environmental, economic and social values in the planning area. Implementation and effectiveness monitoring will take place on a regular basis. The draft monitoring report[29] describes the results of an implementation assessment of the KLRMP strategies for the planning area to date.

The implementing agencies have developed a strategy implementation plan. The strategy implementation plan assesses, for each strategy in the KLRMP, agency responsibility and actions to implement each strategy. Of the 221 KLRMP strategies, 41 are considered "base" strategies that are implemented and monitored through basic agency programs. The remaining 180 strategies are considered "incremental" to agency programs, and thus form the foundation of the KLRMP monitoring report.

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[29] Kispiox Land and Resource Management Plan: Draft Monitoring Report, Kispiox Forest District, June 2001.

All "incremental" strategies have been assessed by the appropriate agency(s), for their level of compliance with respect to management practices on Crown land in the planning area. Each strategy is also described to reflect the level of progress with respect to implementation as follows:

Not Started	- strategies where no substantial progress has been achieved in implementation;
Initiated	- strategies where initiation of at least one action has occurred;
Midway	- strategies where work is underway on most actions;
Substantially Complete	- strategies where work is underway on most actions and where many actions are substantially complete; and
Complete	- strategies where all actions are underway and the strategy has been implemented according to the direction set out in the KLRMP.

Overall, the implementing agencies found that 70 % of the strategies were Midway or greater for level of implementation. This is summarized in the following table.

Implementation progress category	**# of strategies**	**Percentage of total KLRMP strategies**
Not started	22[30]	12 %
Initiated	32	18 %
Midway	40	22 %
Substantially complete	36	20 %
Complete	50	28 %

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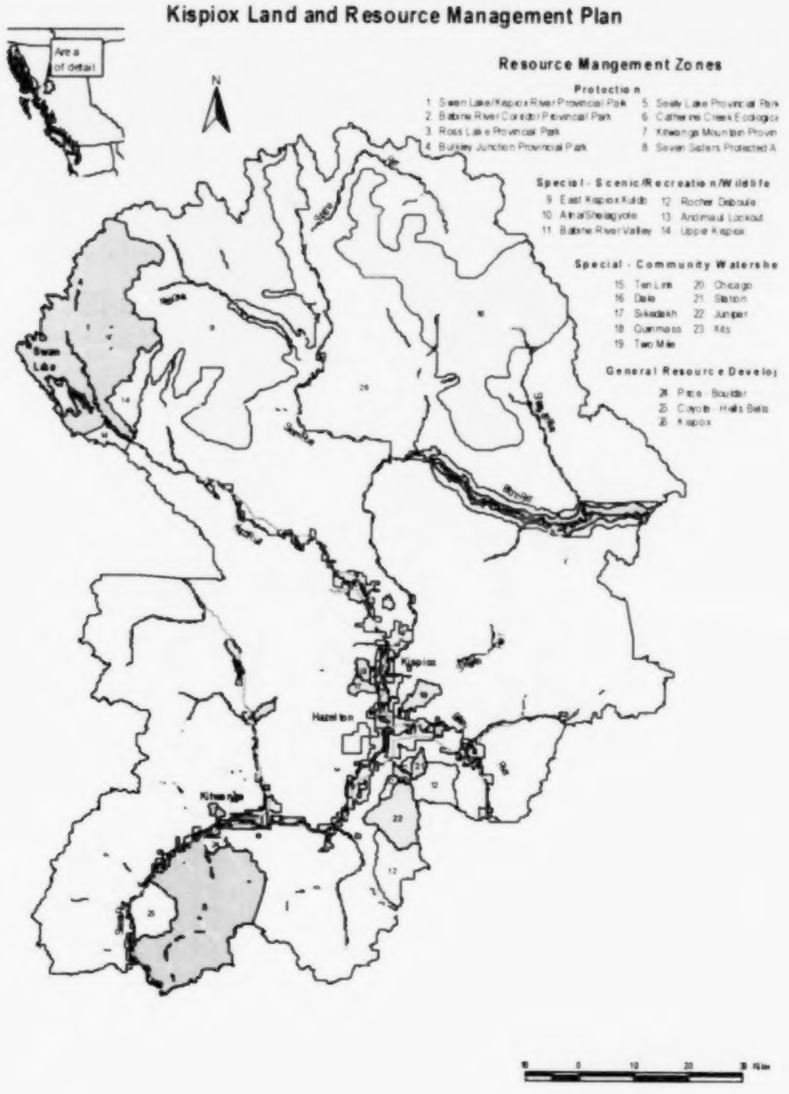
[30] Neither development nor permitting of harvesting operations has occurred to date in the Upper Kispiox SMZ or the Seven Sisters GRDZ, therefore 16 strategies which relate to operations in these areas have been ranked as NS (not started).

Exhibit 13: Kispiox LRMP Map


Kispiox Land and Resource Management Plan
Area of detail
N
Resource Mangement Zones
Protection
1 Swan Lake/Kispiox River Provincial Park
2 Babine River Corridor Provincial Park
3 Ross Lake Provincial Park
4 Bulkley Junction Provincial Park
5 Seeley Lake Provincial Park
6 Catherine Creek Ecologica
7 Kitwanga Mountain Provin
8 Seven Sisters Protected A
Special - Scenic/Recreation/Wildlife
9 East Kispiox Kuldo
10 Ahna/Shelagyote
11 Babine River Valley
12 Rocher Deboule
13 Andimaul Lookout
14 Upper Kispiox
Special - Community Watershe
15 Ten Link
16 Dale
17 Sikedakh
18 Quinmass
19 Two Mile
20 Chicago
21 Station
22 Juniper
23 Kits
General Resource Develo
24 Price - Boulder
25 Coyote - Hells Bells
26 Kispiox
Swan Lake
Kispiox
Hazelton
Kitwanga
10 0 10 20 30 Km

5.4.1.1 KISPIOX LRMP - RECREATION

The Kispiox Land and Resource Management Plan was approved in April 1996. It provides the following objectives for recreation:

- Maintain recreation values and opportunities
- Maintain public access to recreational opportunities and established recreational features
- Maintain primitive, semi-primitive and wilderness recreation opportunities
- Main backcountry recreation opportunities in the East Kispiox/Kuldo, Atna/Shelagyote and Rocher Deboule area

Protect important recreation features including:

- Kispiox, Babine, Bulkley, Suskwa, Kitseguecla and Skeena river corridors for fishing and boating
- Upper Skeena River for rafting
- Hagwilget and Bulkley Canyons on the Bulkley River
- Dominion Telegraph trail
- Babine River Valley

5.4.1.2 KISPIOX LRMP - TOURISM

The Kispiox Land and Resource Management Plan provides the following objectives for tourism:

- Maintain tourism opportunities based on recreation, wilderness, scenery, fish wildlife and cultural heritage resources
- Provide a wilderness environment for fishing, boating, hiking, hunting, camping and wildlife viewing
- Foster a sustainable tourism industry

5.4.1.3 KISPIOX LRMP – VISUAL QUALITY

The Kispiox Land and Resource Management Plan directs that visual quality be maintained in the following scenic areas:

- Highway corridors for highways 16 and 37
- Babine River
- Seven Sisters area
- Kispiox River Valley
- Skeena River Valley
- Swan Lake area
- Hazelton area

- Area around Ross Lake and Seeley Lake provincial parks
- BC Forest Service recreation sites and trails
- Important recreational fishing areas

Generally visual landscape inventories have been completed for most of the scenic areas, with the exception of forest recreation trails. These inventories are consulted during the forest development planning process.

Although the Kispiox LRMP provides land-use zonation and overall strategic resource management direction, there are several other resource planning and management processes which can impact on backcountry tourism development in the study area. These are briefly discussed below:

5.4.2 Babine Drainage Access Management

The Babine Local Resource Management Plan (LRUP) directs that access management planning be completed for the Babine Watershed. An access plan was created for the Bulkley District in 1994. A draft plan for the Kispiox District was presented to the public in December 2000 and final decisions regarding access management in this watershed were expected to be made by March 2002.

5.4.3 Other Access Management

Access management in other areas of the Kispiox Forest District is considered on a case-by-case basis during the forest development planning process.

5.4.4 BC Parks

Management Direction Statements (MDS) have been completed for most protected areas identified and set aside by the LRMP. The Seven Sisters MDS is expected by the summer of 2001. These direction statements provide interim management direction until management plans can be prepared. They state what kinds of recreation/tourism activities are appropriate for each area, for instance whether or not motorized use may occur, where aircraft may land.

5.4.5 Commercial Backcountry Recreation

BC Assets and Lands continues to encourage applicants with an interest in developing commercial recreation ventures to put forward proposals. In the Bulkley Valley an application for commercial snowmobile tours is currently in the review process. The operators of the Hudson Bay Mountain ski hill are also investigating the possibility of expanding their land base and size of operation.

5.4.6 Babine River Corridor Provincial Park

A recently completed study by Hillcrest Recreation Consulting Inc. et al examines capacity for recreation use on the Babine River. According to river users who participated in the study, recreation use on the river is near or at capacity. Consequently BC Parks is not likely to entertain any proposal which would significantly increase recreation use – particularly during the peak August/September season.

5.4.7 Fort St. James LRMP

The Fort St. James LRMP was approved in March 1999. The Fort St. James has the following General Management Direct for tourism:

- Manage for a variety of tourism experiences across the landscape
- Maintain the quality of tourism activities
- Maintain opportunities for tourism operations and development
- Increase communications between tourism operations and other resource users
- Evaluate commercial backcountry recreation (CBR) proposals with environmental, economic and social criteria consistent with provincial legislation, policies and local planning processes.

The following **Resource Management Zones** are in the Kispiox study area for this project. For each of these zones LRMP direction related to Recreation and tourism are included:

- Bait RMZ. – multi-value. Identify and implement suitable recreational trail development
- Squingula RMZ. – multi-value. As a priority develop a Coordinated access management plan. Recognize the potential backcountry recreational opportunities in the Jake Creek Valley. Consider not developing roaded access to Motase Lake. Consider not developing any new recreational facilities on Motase Lake
- Driftwood RMZ – resource development. Develop an access management plan which considers minimizing access to alpine areas and minimizing road access to the Lion and Kotsine Burns. Consider not developing any large recreation sites in this zone. Consider developing a canoe route on the Driftwood River. Plan for non-roaded recreational access in the headwaters of the zone in the vicinity of the unnamed, small lake group.
- Lower Sustut RMZ – special management. As a priority, develop a coordinated access management plan (CAMP). Manaage the Sustut and Bear Rivers to maintain a remote recreational experience. Develop Forest recreation sites away from the Sustut and Bear Rivers. Address the maintenance of the resource attributes associated with the classified water portion of the Sustut River. Adopt visual quality objectives as recommended in the Sustut LRUP.
- Sustut RMZ – multi-value. As a priority, develop a coordinated access management plan (CAMP). Manage Bear Lake to maintain the remote recreational experience.
- Canyon Lake RMZ – multi-value. Develop a coordinated access management plan (CAMP).
- Damdochax RMZ – protected area. Straddles Ft. St. James and Kalum districts
- Skeena RMZ – multi-value. As a priority, develop a coordinated access management plan (CAMP). Recognize and manage to maintain the values of the Skeena River for whitewater rafting and kayaking.
- Groundhog RMZ – Special Management. As a priority, develop a coordinated access management plan (CAMP). Maintain the values associated with classified waters on the Kluatantan River.

Chapter 6

6 Tourism Resources of the Kispiox Forest District & Gitx̲san Areas of Interest

6.1 Study Area and Features

The Kispiox Forest District and the Gitx̲san Area of Interest are well suited for water and mountain based activities. The presence of rolling alpine, jagged peaks, rock bluffs, white and flat water rivers, and lakes all benefit the opportunities for summer based activities. In the remote sections of the study area (Bell II), superior snow quality and depth offer tremendous winter opportunities (primarily associated with heli-skiing). Wildlife and sports fish compliment the features.

It is an abundant land and humans have presided here for over 10,000 years. Over the course of time, a rich culture full of art, stories, knowledge and trade flourished. Wars were fought and alliances made. The historical presence of the First Nations can still be felt and seen among the people who reside here. Over time, the land attracted people from distant countries. The historical presence can be seen in a number of structures. Unfortunately, these structures were made of wood and over time a number have been reclaimed by the land. Today there are more recent totems and structures as well as remaining vestiges. The visitor is left to imagine human settlement and activity in this land.

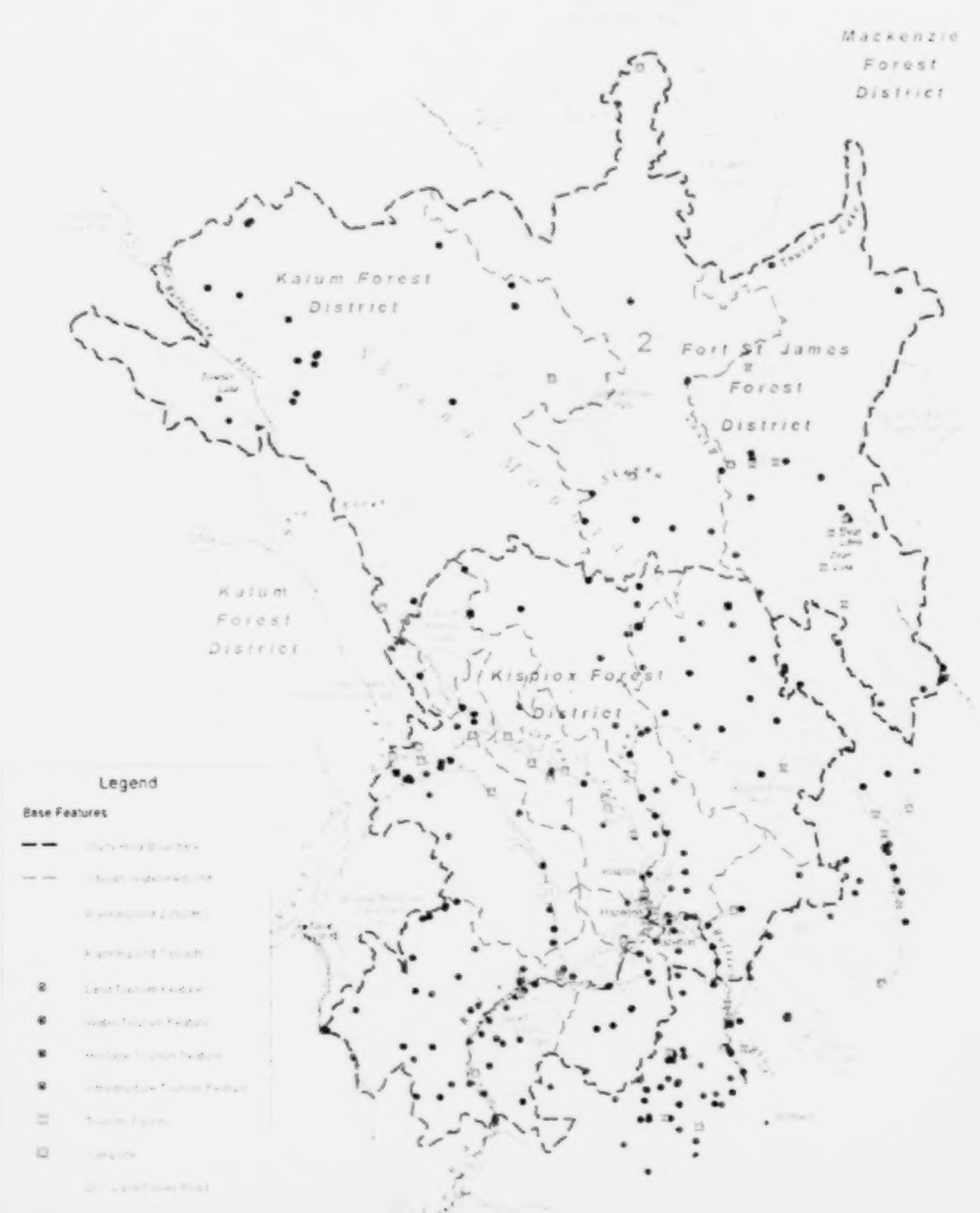
An overview map showing existing tourism features and facilities is shown in Exhibit 14.

6.2 Resource Area Description

In the Kispiox and Gitx̲san Study Area, the feature and landscape accessibility and geographical relationships provides a guide for division into resource areas or units. Two units were identified: the remote and roadless northern half with boundaries defined by the 3 northern Gitx̲san watersheds and the roaded and largely accessible southern half (an area that includes the remaining 6 Gitx̲san watersheds and the Gitanyow traditional territories. They are discussed in the following table (Exhibit 15) and are further divided by the areas of high tourism and recreation potential.

Kispiox Tourism Opportunity Study

Tourism Features and Facilities


Mackenzie Forest District
Kalum Forest District
2
Fort St James Forest District
Kalum Forest District
Kispiox Forest District
1
Legend
Base Features
Land Tourism Feature
Water Tourism Feature
Heritage Tourism Feature
Infrastructure Tourism Feature
Tourism Facility
Campsite

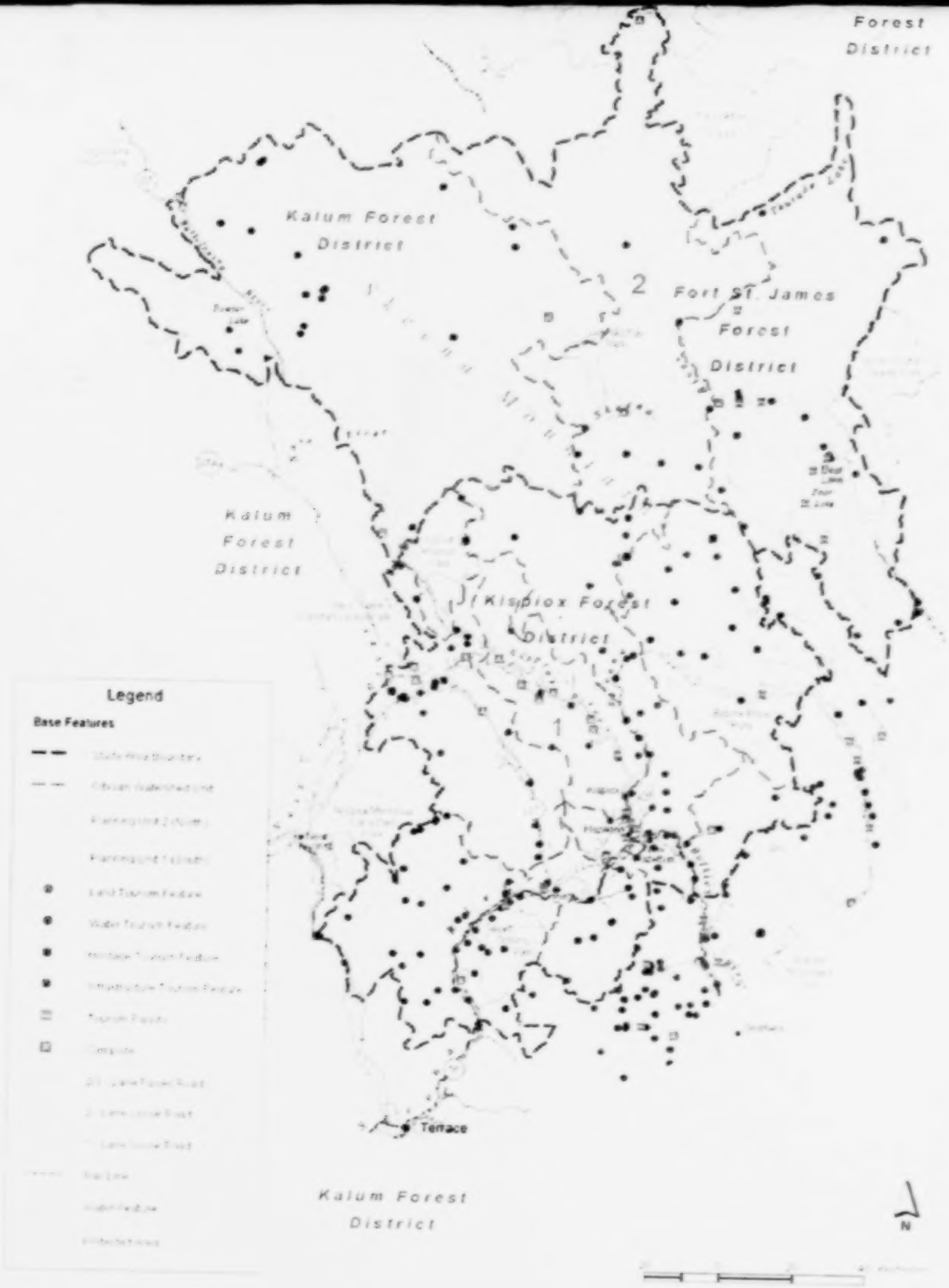

Forest District
Kalum Forest District
2
Fort St. James Forest District
Kalum Forest District
Kispiox Forest District
1
Terrace
Kalum Forest District
N
Legend
Base Features
Study Area Boundary
Official Watershed Unit
Planning Unit 2 (North)
Planning Unit 1 (South)
Land Tourism Feature
Water Tourism Feature
Heritage Tourism Feature
Infrastructure Tourism Feature
Tourism Facility
Campsite
Rail Line
Water Feature
Protected Areas

Exhibit 15: Unit Descriptions

UNITS	FOCUS	DESCRIPTIONS
SOUTHERN The Southern Unit provides mid to back country recreation opportunities. It is signified by: Dramatic Ranges with extensive alpine, subalpine and icefields. Rivers with world class rafting and kayaking. Rivers suitable for canoeing and drifting. Lakes	**ASHMAN RANGE**	**General Description:** Dramatic landscape with jagged peaks, steep slopes, alpine, subalpine, cirque basins, extensive snow and ice. Rolling terrain. **Outstanding Features:** Kitsun/Mulwain alpine area. Peaks, alpine/sub-alpine. **Associated Products and activities:** Mountaineering, Hiking, Ski mountaineering. **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** Ashman ridge is designated non-motorized under the RAMP
	MOUNT SIR ROBERT RANGE	**General Description:** Jagged peaks with sharp ridges and sections of rolling subalpine. Glacier. **Outstanding Features:** Peaks, glacier. **Associated Products and activities:** Mountaineering, Hiking, Ski tour. **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** This area has been suggested as one with potential for a ski touring hut based on fly in access.
	SEVEN SISTERS	**General Description:** Jagged peaks with sharp ridges and sections of rolling subalpine. Readily accessed. **Outstanding Features:** Scenic peaks. Small glacier. Trail system. **Associated Products and activities:** Mountaineering, Hiking, Ski tour. **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** Protected Area.
	KISPIOX RIVER	**General Description:** Meandering river through harvested area. Contains a world renowned steelhead fishery (noted for the size and number of fish) **Outstanding Features:** Steelhead fishiery, optimum canoeing and drifting. Sandhill crane migration route. **Associated Products and activities:**Boating, drifting, canoeing, fishing. **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** Presence of destination lodges. Fishery constraints . Potential conflicts between boaters and fishers.
	KISPIOX MOUNTAIN	**General Description:** Extensive alpine meadows and rolling ridges. Small lakes and ponds. Readily accessed. **Outstanding Features:** Long extensive alpine route and ready access (Moonlit trail) **Associated Products and activities:** Hiking, Ski touring, Snowmobiling. **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** Potential for hut development.
	THOMLINSON	**General Description:** Jagged peaks with sharp ridges and sections of rolling subalpine. Small glaciers. Readily accessed. **Outstanding Features:** Long extensive access to alpine. **Associated Products and activities:** Hiking, Ski touring, Snowmobiling. Mountaineering. **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:**

UNITS	FOCUS	DESCRIPTIONS
	KITWANGA, SKEENA WEST AND FIDDLER	**General Description:** Extensive alpine meadows and rolling ridges. Sections of steep ridges and peaks. Small lakes and ponds. Readily accessed. **Outstanding Features:** Long extensive alpine route. **Associated Products and activities:** Hiking, Ski touring, Snowmobiling. Destination lodges and huts **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** Gitxsan interpretive lodges and huts are under development in Fiddler Range.
	ATNA	**General Description:** Extensive alpine meadows and rolling ridges to the north with increasing steepness to the south.. Small lakes and ponds. Remote. **Outstanding Features:** Long extensive alpine routes. **Associated Products and activities:** Hiking, Ski touring, Snowmobiling. Destination lodges and huts **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** Access will increase with the development of the Tommy Jack Pass road.
	SICINTINE RANGE	**General Description:** Remote dramatic landscape with extensive ridges with rolling alpine and sub-alpine, jagged peaks, steep slopes (limited to valleys), glacier. **Outstanding Features:** Rolling alpine with dramatic features. Shelagyote Peak. Extensive glacial features including morraines, outwash plains and braided streams. **Associated Products and activities:** Ski mountaineering (easy to get around), **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** The portion of these ranges in both the Kispiox and Bulkley districts are both in special management zones which include no logging prescriptions.
	BABINE LAKE & RIVER	**General Description:** The Babine River is renowned as a wilderness river with high wildlife values, a world class steelhead fishery and a regionally important sockeye fishery. Regionally important Grizzly Bear population with high probability of sightings along the river. **Outstanding Features:** Babine River **Associated Products and activities:** Rafting, Kayaking, Nature observation, Fishing. **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** The Babine River corridor was established to protect wildlife and recreation values by the LRMP process. The section of the river (downriver from Nilkitkwa Lake) has been turned into a Provincial Park. According to a recent study commissioned by BC Parks, the Babine River is close to or exceeding recreation carrying capacity. A high percentage of this area has operable forest.
	THOEN FRENCH RANGE	**General Description:** This section has extensive rounded ridges with rolling sub-alpine and alpine. **Outstanding Features:** Rolling alpine, historical mineral exploration activity **Associated Products and activities:** Hiking, Ski touring, Snowmobiling. **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** Area is rated as important for Grizzly in the Bulkley LRMP

UNITS	FOCUS	DESCRIPTIONS
NORTHERN The Northern Unit provides remote back country recreation opportunities. It is signified by: Rolling ridges with jagged peaks. Extensive alpine. Lakes, Rivers, including the Babine (from the Bulkley Forest District), Sustut, Skeena Rivers	**BELL 2**	**General Description:** Grouping of a number of ranges with rolling ridges, cirques and bowls and .excellent snowfall **Outstanding Features**: Wide expanses of alpine meadow/subalpine forest. Snowfall. **Associated Products and activities:** Heli-skiing, Ski touring. **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** Heli-sking tenure over most of the area.
	DRIFTWOOD, SUSTUT AND BEAR	**General Description:** Includes Bear and Motase Lakes. The rivers and lakes are renowned as a wilderness with high wildlife and scenic values and a world class fishery. **Outstanding Features:** Bear Lake, Moase Lake, Driftwood River, Bear River, Sustut River and Squingula River. Fish and wildlife (big game). **Associated Products and activities:** Motorized boating, Canoeing, Hunting, Nature observation, Fishing. Destination lodges. **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints** The area has a number of guide outfitter camps and destination lodges..
	SICINTINE RANGE	**General Description:** Remote dramatic landscape with extensive ridges with rolling alpine and sub-alpine, jagged peaks, steep slopes (limited to valleys), glacier. **Outstanding Features:** Rolling alpine with dramatic features. Shelagyote Peak. Extensive glacial features including morraines, outwash plains and braided streams, many small lakes & wetlands. **Associated Products and activities:** Ski mountaineering (easy to get around). **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** The portion of these ranges in both the Kispiox and Bulkley districts are both in special management zones which include no logging prescriptions.
	DRIFTWOOD RANGES	**General Description:** Remote range, southern half sawtooth ranges, glaciers to the east side of range, northern half rocky ridges, cirque basins and small lakes **Outstanding features:** remote wilderness mountains, high chances of solitude **Associated Products and activities:** Hiking, Mountaineering, Snowmobiling **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** Forestry development will make these ranges more accessible in the near future.

6.3 Product Selection

The Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture identified over 50 potential tourism activities, which were evaluated by the consulting team to determine which offer the greatest potential for **outdoor recreation-based tourism** development in the Kispiox Forest District and the Gitxsan Area of Interest. A short-list was generated based on the consultants' knowledge of the resource base, market trends and economic factors of the study area, priorities defined by the funding agencies, and experience conducting similar studies in other parts of B.C.

The team members were tasked with identifying which represented, in their opinion, the most potential for opportunity development. When the final results were tallied, a general consensus was reached regarding which tourism activities merit further research. Those chosen were grouped or singled out into a tourism product. Each tourism product may represent a number of activities that have a common relationship.

The tourism products evaluated are:

- Front and Mid Country Adventure
- Summer Trail Products
- Nature Observation/Heritage Interpretation
- Nordic Skiing/Ski Touring
- Fresh Water Activity: Non-motorized and Motorized
- Air Tour and Access
- Road Tour
- Destination Lodge / Hut system

These final products can be regarded as the best short-term options for outdoor recreation-based tourism products. However none exist in isolation, and opportunities to build on clusters of tourism products or where products could be linked are extremely important and are described in this report.

The "top products" should not be considered an all-inclusive list as there are likely other tourism products or activities not evaluated for in this study, which have enormous short or longer term potential. For example, as the primary focus for tourism development in this study is outdoor recreation products, an activity such as a festival or cultural event, which may have high potential in the short term, was not evaluated.

Each of the selected tourism products was also evaluated to determine the land's suitability to support the product. The result of this analysis is entered into the discussion in the following chapter and in the suitability maps.

Exhibit 16 provides an overview matrix of the required resources, complementary products and development considerations of each of the eight tourism "products".

Exhibit 16: Product Descriptions

Product Line	Product Delivery	Complementary Product Lines	DESIRABLE RESOURCES	Product Enhancement	Development Considerations *	Comments
WATER						
Freshwater: Non-motorized Kayaking Canoeing Rafting Tubing (camping)	• Linear • Circle • Shuttle • Single/Multi day • Guided /Unguided • Instructional	• Cultural Heritage • Nature Observation • Lodge • Marine Cruising • Water: Activities • Scenic viewing • Enthusiast - water	• River and/or lakes • Range of whitewater class suitable to skill/activities • "Play" areas , Scenic areas, Reliable fauna sightings, Wilderness areas, Fish • Complimentary trails to views/features. Camping locations and infrastructure	• Put in/pull out sites • Trails along difficult stretches • Non-motorized zoning • Viewscape management • Interpretive information • Guide books/services • Shuttle services • Watercraft rentals • Safety provisions	• River classification • Environmental Impacts • Heritage Impacts • Impacts on wildlife • Safety Issues	• Complementary Businesses: Shuttle services (Van, Float Plane), Watercraft rentals, River Guide services, Interpretive Guide services, Hospitality industry
Freshwater: Motorized Motor boating Jet boating	• Circle • Linear • Localized • Guided / Unguided	• Cultural Heritage • Nature Observation • Lodge, Touring • Water: Activities • Scenic viewing	• Rivers and/or lakes, Scenic areas, Reliable fauna sightings, Roads suitable for boat trailers, Fish	• Put in/pull out sites, Supportive management planning, Viewscape management, Support businesses (fuel, repair equipment sales, rental,)	• Negative social impacts • Environmental Impacts • Heritage Impacts • Use conflicts	• Complementary businesses: Equipment sales rental & repair, Fueling Services.
LAND - SUMMER						
Mountaineering (part of ADVENTURE) Ski mountaineering Mountaineering Rock climbing Ice climbing	• Single/Multi day • Linear, Shuttle • Circle • Guided/ Unguided • Instructional	• Enthusiast • Hut System • Scenic Viewing • Nature Observation	• Solid rock, climbing ice, cliffs, escarpments, Boulders, canyons, Glaciers, ice fields, remote, rugged alpine ridges, Peaks, suitable rock types. • Camp sites/Potable water	• Access • Infrastructure development (hut system). • Shuttle services	• Safety Issues • Avalanche Conditions Impact on the setting • Environmental Impacts	• Complementary businesses: Mountain guide, Hiking guide, Shuttle services, Equipment rental, guidebook production
Hiking, Animal	• Single/Multi day	• Hut System, Lodges	• Trails (Length, condition, level of	• Loop trails development	• Environmental Impacts	• Complementary Businesses: Hiking

Product Line	Product Delivery	Complementary Product Lines	DESIRABLE RESOURCES	Product Enhancement	Development Considerations *	Comments
Assisted Hiking Backpacking Horse/Llama Transportation (camping)	• Circle • Linear • Shuttle • Guided /Unguided • Instructional	• Nature Observation • Cultural Heritage • Scenic viewing	difficulty), Feature clusters (Lakes, ponds, streams, flower meadows, glaciers, accessible peaks), Reliable fauna sightings • Historic/cultural features, Scenic areas. Non-motorized areas, Camp sites, Potable water, Proximity to population	• Trail maintenance • Access road improvement • Viewscape management • Shuttle services • Primitive and Semi-primitive ROS	• Tenures • Heritage Impacts • Use conflict (motorized)	guides, Guidebook production, Shuttle services, Photography courses, Equipment sales and rental, lodges
Mountain biking Classic Downhill Long Distance	• Single/Multi day • Circle, Shuttle • Guided /Unguided	• Hut System • Lodges, Air • Scenic viewing	• Trails (Specific desirable trail features) • Feature clusters (see above)	• Trail / Infrastructure development • Loop trails	• Environmental Impacts • Use conflict	• Complementary Businesses: Bike rental and repair, Guided tours, Shuttle services, Guidebook production.
SNOW						
Non-Motorized Ski touring X-country skiing	• Single/Multi day • Shuttle, Linear, Circle. Instructional • Guided /Unguided •	• Lodges • Hut System • Air • Scenic viewing	• Optimum snow conditions • Access-short time to reach optimum area. Optimum areas - Trails and Open terrain. Variety of terrain for various skill levels	• Access • Designated non-motorized area • Road clearing/parking • Loop trails, Groomed trails	• Environmental Impacts • Impacts on wildlife • Avalanche conditions	• Complementary businesses: Guided tours, equipment sales and rentals, guidebook production, lodges.
TRANSPORT						
Air (Helicopter/ Fixed Wing)	• Circle • Shuttle • Linkage • Guided	• Heli-skiing • Fishing, Hiking • Backcountry skiing • Biking, Touring Nature	• Scenic areas, Rivers/Lakes, Open terrain, Trails, Optimum snow conditions • Reliability of fauna	• Proximity of base camp to important features • Linkage with other Tour types • Viewscape	• Impacts on wildlife Environmental Impacts • Negative social impacts	• Suitable helicopter drop/off pickup is preferably less than a half hour. Complementary businesses: Production

Product Line	Product Delivery	Complementary Product Lines	DESIRABLE RESOURCES	Product Enhancement	Development Considerations *	Comments
		Observation • Scenic Viewing • Lodges	sightings • Loop tour opportunities	management	• Tenure	of guide media, Local tour guides, link to other tour types (road, water, rail). The helicopter product can compliment communities/lodges.
OBSERVATION						
Cultural Heritage	• Interpretive Centers • Expositions • Guided • Single / Multi day • Instructional	• Interpretation • Guided tours • Touring Products • Lodges • Nature Observation • Scenic Viewing	• Visible heritage features • Known heritage values	• Heritage Interpretation • Heritage Exposition • Infrastructure development • Viewscape Management	• Sensitivity of information. • Local capacity to do Interpretation	• First Nations (FN) and immigrant heritage can stand alone or compliment each other. FN and Immigrant heritage compliment and thus important to the other products. • Complementary businesses: art and crafts, production of guide media, local tour guides, interpretive productions.
Nature Observation Grizzly viewing Bird watching Butterfly watching Wildlife watching Salmon runs Canopy walks	• Linear • Circle • Single/Multi-day • Guided /Self-guided • Canopy walks • Instructional	• Tours • Land • Water • Scenic Viewing Cultural Heritage	• Reliability of wildlife sightings • Safe Viewing areas • Scenic/Unique features • Trails/ Platforms • Proximity to good roads	• Interpretive media/guides • Viewscape Management	• Wildlife management * • Environmental Impacts • Local capacity to do Interpretation • Safety Issues	• Anchor species include bears, whales, birds. Other flora and fauna provide an important compliment. • Complementary businesses: production of guide media, souvenir items, local tour guides.
ACCOMODATION						
Lodge / Resort	• River, Land, • Shoreline • Feature • Amenity (golf	• Activity focused: • Retreat, Ranch, Spa, Cultural, Wilderness, Fish , Land- summer • Land Winter, Air • Scenic Viewing	• Focus- wildlife, culture, setting, sport fish • Scenic/unique features • Suitable location • Opt. Snow conditions	• Proximity to relevant features • Scenic assurance	• Tenures • Environmental Impacts • Fish sustainability • Suitable locations	• Lodge placement expands the base from which associated products can emerge.

Product Line	Product Delivery	Complementary Product Lines	DESIRABLE RESOURCES	Product Enhancement	Development Considerations *	Comments
	course)		• Trails		• Social acceptability	
Hut System	• Single or multi • String or cluster • Lake (shuttle) • River (shuttle) • Trail (linear or circle)	• Ski Touring, Fishing • Animal Assisted • Snowmobiling • Boating (small) • Cultural Heritage Nature Observe • Scenic Viewing	• Scenic/unique features • Suitable locations • Focus- wildlife, culture, setting and sport fish. • Ease of travel between huts	• Unobtrusive setting • Critical mass development to allow for efficiency. • Scenic assurance • Non-motorized area	• Vandalism • Tenures • Social • LAC /CC • Avalanche conditions	• High to low end. Provides opportunity to move recreationists from environmentally /culturally sensitive sites. Complementary businesses: Shuttling, equipment sales and rentals, guidebook production

* DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS:

Wildlife Management: must address conflict with people, habituation of the animals to the people, and disturbance to the wildlife and their environs (this includes auditory impacts).

Heritage impacts: must address physical disturbance of heritage (archaeological) sites and artifacts.

Environmental impacts: must address the ecological impacts of an area that results from the kind of use, overuse, waste management, poor behaviour, timing of the activities and the distribution of the use. Refer to the guidelines on Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC).

Negative social impacts: Generally associated with the disturbance of the peace and tranquilty of a recreation experience by an activity or participant behaviour.

Site Impacts: accounting for the carrying capacity (focused on the amount of use) and the Limits of Acceptable Change.

Alteration of Setting: the setting relates to the experience associated with an activity ranging from Primitive to Urban. The criteria are identified in the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS).

Safety Issues: Safety issues are dependent on the activity and are focused on the participant. Liability issues should be incorporated.

Use Conflicts: Use conflicts can be between motorized and non-motorized, mechanized and non-motorized.

6.4 Community and Product Matching

Throughout this section, identified opportunities are associated with the community situated in the optimum geographical location to benefit from development. These communities may or may not support development of that particular opportunity. Opportunities were identified and associated with communities without prejudice to treaty negotiations or First Nation's traditional territories. First Nation leaders have stated that they will not pursue opportunities outside of their traditional territory; they will defer to the Nation in whose territory the opportunity is positioned and will work towards cooperative management in areas that they share. The following table links tourism opportunities to the communities of Kitwanga and the Hazeltons.

Kitwanga & the Hazeltons	
PRODUCT	**DESCRIPTION**
Front and Mid Country Adventure	Rock climbing and river rafting opportunities. Mountain biking can be developed for the enthusiast.
Whitewater Kayaking and Rafting	The whitewater of the Bulkley River is a well known for rafting and kayaking.
Ski Touring	A variety of settings, relatively good access and support from the community enhance the opportunities provided by the optimal snowfall and ideal topography in close proximity of the population centers. Conflict with snowmobile use is a consideration in areas outside Parks and designated zones.
Summer Trail	Focused on the rolling ridges of the Thoen French and the Fort Babine - Hazelton historical trail.
Nature Observation/ Cultural Heritage	The history and traditional livelihood of the Natooten allows for tremendous interpretive opportunities. There are however, limited physical artefacts useable as tourism attractions. The is high reliability for the viewing of Grizzly and Black bear along the Babine River north of the Fishing weir. The Salmon run along the river is spectacular. There are mountain goat on the Natazul Mountains.
Flatwater (Drifting, Canoeing, Boating)	The Kispiox River, Kitwancool Lake, Kitsegukla River and the lower Skeena are very suitable for flatwater boating activities.
Air (Helicopter and Fixed Wing)	A 60 km radius reaches scenic areas with a variety of topography from rugged peaks, steep terrain and glaciers. Wildlife is difficult to detect and the possibility for disturbance is high.
Road Touring	Road tour opportunities are associated with Highway 37, the road to Kitwancool and Cranberry Junction and the road along the Kispiox River. The Hagwilget Bridge is a feature..
Destination Lodge	This area has lodge opportunities associated with the high heritage values linked to the Skeena River. High fishing values of the Kispiox river.
Hut Systems	Hut system can be linked to the trails of the Seven Sisters and Fiddler Ranges and to the Fort Babine to Hazelton Historical route.

Chapter 7

7 Tourism Opportunity Analysis

7.1 Air Tour and Access

7.1.1 Description

The Air Tour and Access Product is associated with scenic touring as well as providing access to and opportunities for mountain biking, paragliding, hiking, skiing and fishing. It utilizes the diversity of helicopters and the affordability of fixed wing aircraft. It compliments many tourism activity products. It has two components:

- An ***air tour*** allows tourists an opportunity to view surrounding landscapes while experiencing flying. The tours are best limited to an hour. Dramatic landscapes or diverse features are essential.
- The ***air access tour*** contains an air tour component but it is primarily to get recreationists to where they want to be. The turn around time from the base to the delivery area should be done within the shortest time possible. It is most suited for the helicopter. The access tour can deliver fishermen to the best fishing hole and, if need be, to instantly transfer them to another hole. This is an activity that is best managed by existing guides. Mountain bikers, hikers and ski tours can be delivered to the summit to enjoy the alpine/subalpine ridges and can be picked up or may return by trail. They may take a picnic lunch. Heli-skiing and paragliding activities require drop off at the summit of pristine snowfields, pickup at the base of the hill and then a drop off once again at the summit. The access tour is most profitable where the features are within a 15-minute flight of the base camp or airfield.

To determine the relationship of the features to the base camp or airfield the following criteria were identified:

- The staging areas are determined by their ability to attract tourists, close linkage to industrial opportunities and the availability of required infrastructure.
- An air tour product should not take longer than one hour and at average speeds of up 150km per hour, a 60 km radius from the center is optimal for circle tours.
- The greatest and most profitable opportunities lie where the features are closest to the base camp or airfield.

7.1.2 Regional Overview

Strength	Scenic recreation features suitable for air tour. Suitable activity opportunities close to staging areas. A potential market in tourism traffic using the Highway 16 and Highway 37 routes
Weakness	Mixed support by some parts of the community. Wildlife occur throughout the area and air touring may disturb those in the more scenic areas. Environmental concerns with activities utilizing air access to subalpine/alpine ridges. Lack of existing helicopter bases in either Hazelton or Kitwanga.
Concerns	Land use uncertainties, lack of community support (see above re community support), declining industrial base (leading to removal of helicopters?).

7.1.3 Air Tours and the Kispiox Study Area

The Kispiox Study Area has geographical features well suited for the air tour product. Close to the population centers are the Kispiox, Rocher Deboule, Ashman and the Seven Sisters mountain ranges, some with jagged peaks and others with rounded ridges. Flower meadows with many small lakes and ponds can be found within these ranges. Nearby lakes and rivers provide a diversity of scenery and recreation opportunity.

The primary staging points for air tours are Hazelton, and possibly Kitwanga. A 60 km radius surrounding those points reaches the south end of the Atna Range to the North and the Babine Range and Ashman Range to the south. Although Hazelton / Kitwanga are noted as the primary staging areas, there are opportunities for secondary staging areas associated with existing recreation activity (an existing example is the heli-skiing operations in Bell II). The following discussion identifies the recreation resources within the 60 km range: Limitations to the air access are associated with the time required to reach an area from the staging point (Hazelton).

7.1.3.1 THE SOUTH UNIT

The Babine River and the southernmost end of the Atna Range fall within the 60 kilometer range. To the south all the ranges within the Kispiox Forest District as well as ranges in the adjoining Bulkley Forest District lies within the 60 kilometer range.

Air Tours

- Kitwanga, Hazelton Peak, Kispiox Range, Mt Thomlinson, Rocher Deboule, Mt. Sir Roberts and the Seven Sisters mountain ranges provide high air tour opportunities for viewing dramatic landscapes of jagged peaks and small glaciers and crystal clear mountain lakes. The tours can include the northwestern section of the Bulkley Forest District.
- The Atna and Shelagyote Ranges are outside the 60 km radius from communities. A tour product will therefore have to go beyond 1 hour and possibly include landing on scenic Sicintine Lake or Gunanoot Lake.
- An hour tour can include the Skeena and Babine rivers with views of the south Atna Range and the Thomlinson Range.

- An air tour can include a pass over the Skeena and Cutoff Mountain, a glimpse of the Atnas, a view of the Babine and of Mt. Thomlinson. Gunanoot Lake lies close to the range and may be a suitable area for landing.

Air Access

Air access can enhance recreation opportunities such as:

- The air access opportunities are not limited by a 60 kilometer radius. Opportunities are linked to accessing destinations of high recreation value. These features can be greater than an hour away and the comfort of the guest must be considered. High scenic values and interspersed landings in interesting locales will enhance a long air access to a destination.
- *Heli-mountain biking* (primarily downhill) from trails in the area, including Rocher Deboule.
- *Heli-fishing* opportunities can be linked to the Kispiox, Skeena and other small rivers and lakes. Heli-fishing is best managed by inclusion of local guides. This operation should be linked to existing operations. Considerations must allow for fishery pressures on existing fish populations, certain lakes contain marginal populations of bull trout, unique sub-species and few large fish.
- *Heli-hiking* and *picnicking* opportunities can be associated with the rolling alpine of the Seven Sisters, Kispiox, Ashman and other ranges.
- *Whitewater kayaking* drop and pick up can be arranged along the Zymoetz (and Copper) River.
- *Winter activities* may provide opportunities for helicopter access to ski tours in the nearby ranges.

7.1.3.2 NORTH UNIT

Air tours

The North Unit is outside the 60-kilometer range of the principal communities, however, there is the possibility that the existing winter heli-ski opportunities (such as in Bell 2) can shift to a summer opportunity. The high alpine, icefields, glaciers and the many river valleys are very scenic and may offer a chance for late season skiing, mountaineering, fishing and undoubtedly - for world class touring.

Air Access

Air access to destination features and associated activities is not limited to a 60 kilometer range. Destinations include the vicinity of Bell 2 (where there is an existing tenure and successful operation for heli-skiing), the Driftwood River, Bear Lake and river, Damdochax Lake and a myriad of other lakes and rivers in the region.

7.1.4 Market and Socio-economic Assessment

7.1.4.1 MARKETS

There is no market profile available for helicopter or airplane supported activities. Activities include sightseeing, hiking, trekking/backpacking, trail riding, ATV riding, mountain biking, fishing, skiing and snowmobiling. Helicopter and fixed-wing touring is not confined to the conventional – for example, BC Golf Safaris (Whistler) flies golfers into the alpine for high-altitude golfing. In all cases, the helicopter or fixed-wing aircraft is the primary mode of access to and from a central staging area.

There is existing competition in the Kispiox for this activity as several companies are based in and operate out of Smithers airport. Companies include Canadian Helicopters Ltd. and Alpine Lakes Air both of whom conduct flightseeing, mountaintop picnics and heli-hiking.

7.1.4.2 IMPACTS/CONFLICTS

There is very strong pressure in prime US wilderness areas such as Hawaii and Alaska to reduce or eliminate helicopter tourism, particularly in park areas. Increased noise and access are considered the prime culprits in generating negative environmental impacts.

In BC, the BC Wildlife Federation has often called for a halt to the issuing of CR tenure that involve the use of helicopters in the alpine because of negative impacts on wildlife, their habitats, and also existing recreational users. US studies have shown that in western North America helicopter disturbance of mountain goats and mountain sheep extends to distances up to 2 kilometres. In the study area, heli activities may create some concern for goat populations in places such as Oliver Creek. Grizzly impacts appear to be of most concern as it is believed that summer activities in which participants are dropped off in the alpine have been increasing the risk of grizzly/human conflicts, thereby increasing the probability grizzlies being destroyed for public safety.

7.1.4.3 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Considering that many high capability areas have Commercial Recreation tenures issued, or have tenure applications pending, in addition to the capital-intensive nature of this activity, the potential for expansion may be limited to existing tenure holders. Alternatively, an operator specializing in a core activity such as hiking could charter helicopter use on an as-needed basis.

Since the helicopter or airplane becomes the main mode of transportation to the staging area, the need for on-the-ground transportation infrastructure is considerably lessened. Having a well-serviced and active airport in Smithers can benefit the flight product. Once at the staging area, activity infrastructure is still required. Heli mountain-biking and hiking still require proper trails and signage.

7.1.4.4 OVERALL POTENTIAL

The potential for flight-related outdoor activities in the Kispiox is average because of the area's remoteness; however, Hazelton, Kitwanga and possibly Bell II could be developed as staging areas for the surrounding region, while the existence of small airstrips in the Sustut could lead to air tours and linkages to other activities in the northeast. Competition from Smithers-based operators and the overall low tourism volumes will ultimately limit the potential.

MARKET & SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA

UNITS:		South Unit	North Unit
Markets	Demand	**Low** affordability limited to higher-spending markets	
	Competition	**Medium** heli-ski operators in other areas have the equipment, experience and tenure for product development	
	Overall potential	**Medium**: close proximity of features favour development	**Low**: remote and limited access to features but small airstrips have potential
Impact / Conflict	Use	**Medium** concerns over wildlife impacts and conflicts with non-motorized backcountry activities	
	Community / Social	**Low** concerns would arise over noise depending on flight paths and frequency	
Business Develop-ment Needs	Crown tenure	**Medium-High** secured areas around high quality features or activities would be needed to justify capital investments, but low frequency tours would not require tenure	
	Infrastructure	**Medium-Low** lack of commercial services a concern, but some transportation infrastructure already in place	
	Capital	**Medium-High**: equipment is very high cost, but could be offset through leasing or utilizing existing heli services	
Level of community support		**Medium**: product development would enhance tourism by opening up new, remote areas	
Employment opportunities		**Low**: existing pilots and transport personnel would likely pick up increases in business	
Opportunities		Flight-seeing of local peaks (Hazelton Peak, Kispiox Range, Mt Thomlinson, Rocher Deboule, Mt. Sir Roberts and Seven Sisters) Heli-hiking (West Skeena, Rocher Deboule) Heli-hiking and heli-tours to the Atna Range Heli-ski touring (Tommy Jack Pass)	Flight-seeing (Nass) Partnerships with Last Frontier Heli-skiing for non-ski related tours. Fixed-wing access to small airstrips in the Sustut for multiple activities.

7.1.5 High Opportunity Areas

Polygon Name	Polygon Name
RANGES	**RIVERS / LAKES**
Ashman	Thoen French
Mt. Sir Robert	Seaton Blunt
Thomlinson	Swan Lake[31]
Seven Sisters North and South	Gunanoot Lake
Rocher Deboule	Sicintine Lake
Skeena West	Skeena River
Kitwanga	Damdochax Lake
Kispiox	Canyon Lake
Sicintine	Babine River
Atna	Bear Lake
Bell 2	Motase Lake

7.1.6 Air Tour Suitability Map

Exhibit 17: Air Tour Tourism Suitability Map

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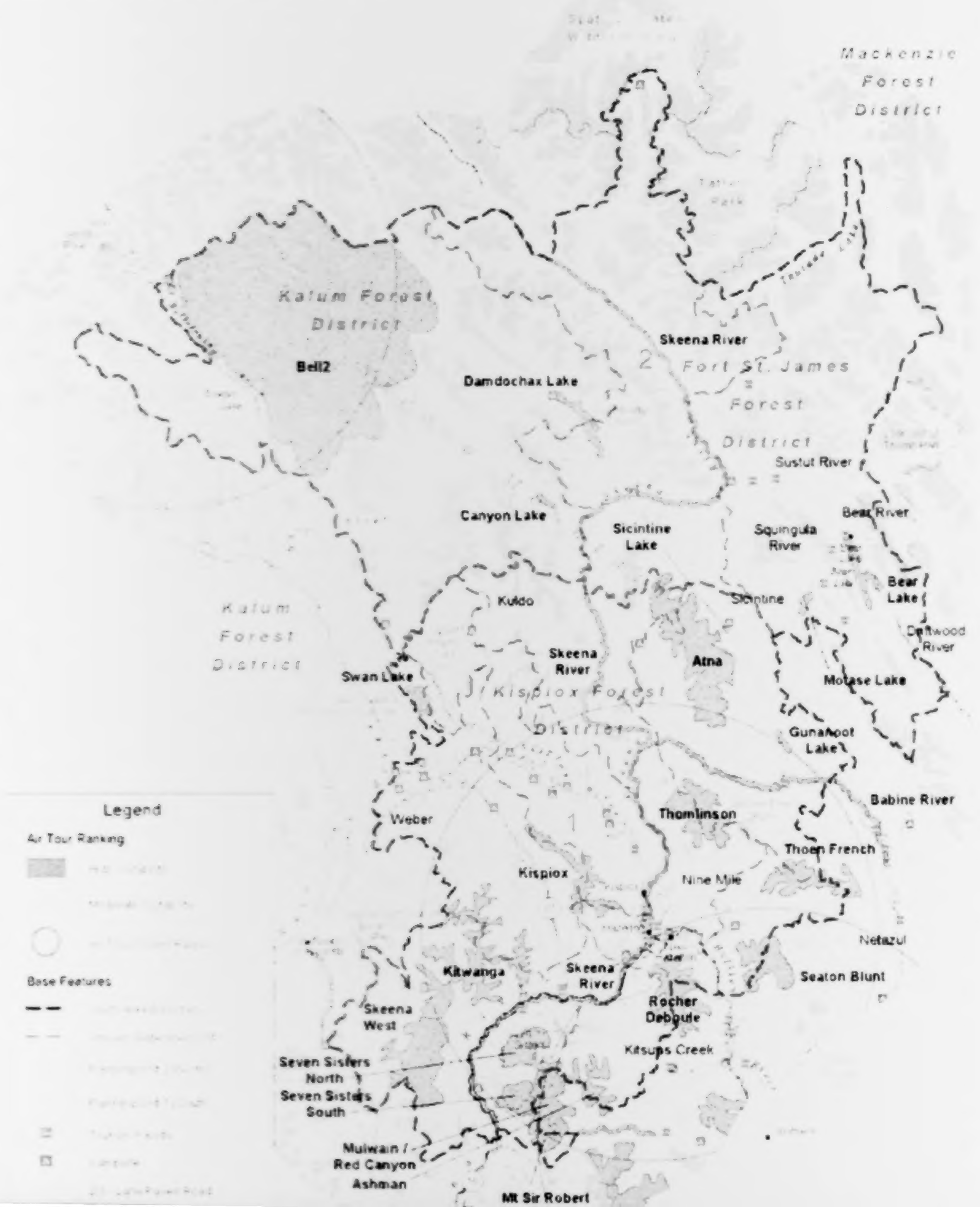
[31] Air tours into the Swan Lake area would now be in contravention of the Swan Lake Wilderness Plan. Please refer to the BC Parks Management Direction Statement for this new protected area.

Kispiox Tourism Opportunity Study

Air Tour Suitability

British Columbia



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Canyon Lake
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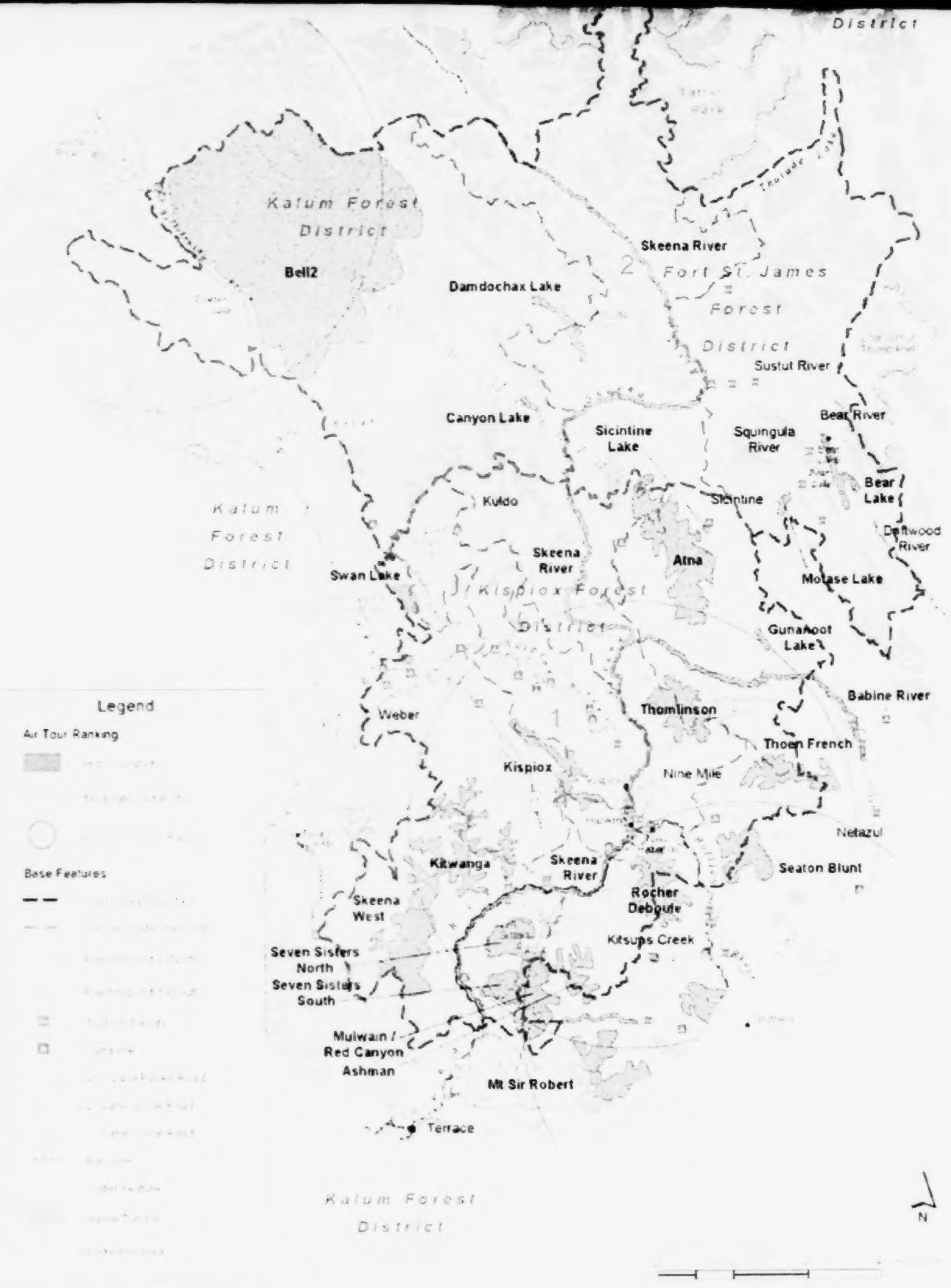
Squingula River
Bear River
Bear Lake
Kuldo
Sicintine
Driftwood River
Kalum Forest District
Skeena River
Atna
Swan Lake
Kispiox Forest District
Motase Lake
Gunanoot Lake
Babine River
Weber
1
Thomlinson
Thoen French
Kispiox
Nine Mile
Netazul
Kitwanga
Skeena River
Seaton Blunt
Rocher Deboule
Skeena West
Kitsups Creek
Seven Sisters North
Seven Sisters South
Mulwain / Red Canyon
Ashman
Mt Sir Robert
Legend
Air Tour Ranking
Base Features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Rocher Deboule
Kitsuns Creek
Seven Sisters North
Seven Sisters South
Mulwain / Red Canyon
Ashman
Mt Sir Robert
Terrace
Kalum Forest District
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7.2 Destination Lodge / Hut system

7.2.1 Description

Destinations Lodges offers private accommodations through separate rooms or cabins. Destination lodges or resorts perform the function of a regional anchor that can support a variety of outdoor adventure tourism products. Traditionally these activities have centered on fishing and hunting, but resorts are now focusing on non-consumptive activities such as nordic skiing, hiking, wildlife viewing and cultural interpretation (components of ecotourism). Activities associated with the lodge can be self-guided or guided with the lodge providing the guides or drawing on the services of local tourism entrepreneurs. Lodges can be accessed from the fly-in backcountry or the paved road frontcountry. The facility can be rustic with only the most basic features or offer full service amenities.

Huts generally offer shared sleeping quarters that may be booked by a single party or shared by different parties. They are meant to provide ecotourism recreationists with a degree of comfort in chosen settings. Huts are as a rule single rooms that provide a rustic experience but there are opportunities to increase the level of comfort through expanding the amenities. The hut system product can be a single destination hut in a particular setting or a string of huts that allow tourists and recreationists the opportunity to pursue their chosen activity unencumbered by the equipment required for multi-day excursions. A hut system allows those who are less skilled or physically fit to appreciate the more remote wilderness and participate more fully in ecotourism. Huts can be linked to and accessed by trails or waterways.

7.2.1.1 HUT TYPES

There are a number of single or system hut product types including:

Lake Huts:

- Suitable lakes are those with outstanding scenery and the presence of beaches, or a cluster of lakes or lakes that are large enough to contain a string of huts. These lakes should not have a perimeter road and the huts must only be accessed by boat, trails or by air.

Trail Huts:

- Best located where there is the presence of an established trail and is a suitable distance from road access. For winter activities a groomed route is an asset.
- Hut systems should be associated with loop trails whereas a destination hut can be at the end of a trail in an area with significant features or high recreation potential. May also be associated with a linear trail as long a drop-off and pick-up can be easily arranged.
- The hut systems can be clustered around outstanding features such as lakes or can be a string that provides shelter along a developed trail.
- Trail hut systems can be used in summer and winter for a variety of activities including hiking, ski touring and snowmobiling.

River Huts:

- The approach is generally in a down river direction.
- Should not be accessible by road.
- Should be perched on high ground and location must be readily apparent to prevent canoeists or kayakers into being forced to return upriver. Signs or symbols posted in visible locations can announce hut site but may be considered inappropriate intrusion in river users' wilderness experience.
- Preferable in areas identified for non-motorized use or areas in which motorized use is impractical or likely to remain low for various reasons.

Opportunities can be affected by cost of maintaining trails, repeatability elsewhere, high potential for vandalism and difficulty in maintaining the site.

7.2.2 Regional Overview

Strengths	Quick access to open extensive alpine and sub-alpine with quality scenic features. Dry snow conditions. Local guides (who have training in a wide range of natural and cultural resources). Strong potential to provide in-depth learning or training in various natural and cultural resource fields
Weaknesses	Vandalism, repeatability of product, more remote alpine areas do not currently have trail access, Lack of maintenance on extensive existing trail system, cost to access region, compliance and enforcement.
Concerns	Shortage of public sector funding to develop and maintain trails. Increased recreation use affecting "remote" experience. Wildlife disturbance and habituation. Obtaining agreement for a commercial hut system has the potential to be a lengthy & expensive process with extended discussions with local stakeholders, including First Nations people. Hut systems orientated towards non-motorized users such as skiers and hikers would have to consider motorized uses such as ATVing and Snowmobiling - non-motorized users often consider motorized use as non-compatible with their activity

7.2.3 Resource Assessment

The Kispiox Study Area has a number of areas that are well suited for Destination Lodges and the Hut system. The terrain includes rivers, lakes, good fishing, open sub-alpine and alpine ridges with small lakes, bowls, glaciers, icefields, meadows, the availability of suitable trails, old mining roads and in the northern section, extensive wilderness areas. Optimal snowfall and the ready access from communities enhance the product viability in the region.

The Destination Lodge and Hut System product can be linked to the culture and heritage of the region through interpretation and awareness building. The Gitx̲san and Gitanyow First Nations people have historically derived their sustenance from the bounty of the land. The abundance allowed time for arts and ritual. The First Nations continued presence as a people and the subtle historical evidence of their relationship to the natural surroundings can heighten the feeling of mystery and wonder for the recreationist.

7.2.3.1 EXISTING LOCATIONS

Destination Lodge

- The Skeena / Kispiox River - there are three fishing lodges present that are focused on the superb Steelhead and Coho fishing of the Kispiox River.
- The Gitangaat Village Site at Fiddler Creek has a traditional longhouse, 3 small cabins, traditional smokehouses and is intended to provide a Gitxsan cultural interpretation, wildlife viewing, horseback riding, overnight camping, war canoeing on the Skeena, traditional medicinal herb gathering and other culturally linked activities.
- The Babine River - there are presently three fishing lodges within the Babine River Protected Area.
- The Kispiox River is suitable for drifting and canoeing and may be suitable for a river hut system. Three fishing lodges are currently associated with this river as well as a commercial campground and three forest recreation sites.
- Bell 2 has a lodge focused on heli-skiing.
- Bear Lake is a large lake with a complex shoreline suitable for destination lodge and hut development. Bear Lake Lodge is located on Bear Lake, accessible by air. It offers, accommodation, hunting, fishing and guiding services.
- The Sustut, Bear and Suskeena Rivers have a number of backcountry lodges focused on fishing and hunting.

Hut Systems

- *Sicintine* is a small scenic lake. A local guide-outfitter already has a base camp on this lake.
- *Gunanoot* is a medium sized lake suitable for a fly in lodge or high end hut. A local guide-outfitter has a camp on an island on this lake.
- Headwaters Guiding Co. guides catch and release fly fishing on the Damdochax and has a main camp on *Damdochax Lake*.
- At present there is a hut at the top of the *Comeau Creek* Road, currently used by hikers in the summer and skiers in the winter.
- There is a cabin at the end of the *Kitsgegas/Atna* trail which is used by snowmobilers in the winter and ATVers in the summer.
- A number of *Gitxsan rediscovery camps*, some with huts have been established. A cultural center with associated huts is presently being developed in the mountains west of the Skeena River.
- There are no huts for river travellers and no linked huts systems currently in use.

7.2.3.2 FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

Features that provide opportunities for the Destination Lodge and Hut system in the study area include lakes, rivers and landbased locations adjacent to significant recreation features. A number of the high quality areas particularly in the South Unit contain destination lodges and outfitter huts. The opportunities in these areas can be diversified and future opportunities should be considered.

South Unit

Lakes and Rivers

- The Kispiox River is suitable for drifting and canoeing and may be suitable for a river hut system. The present lodges are concentrated to the south and there may be opportunities to the north.
- There are opportunities for lodge development associated with the First Nation cultural heritage values, fishing and other products along the Skeena River and the confluence of the Bulkley and Skeena.

Landbased

- The Kispiox Range provides a remote opportunity close to access.
- Seven Sisters provides the variety of scenery and opportunities within a protected area. Suitable for a range of products.
- Rocher Deboule provides a rugged landscape that is suitable for huts or lodges.
- Skeena West (Kitwanga) and Fiddler is an area that has been looked at extensively for the development of destination lodge/huts linked to First Nations heritage. All work has been documented with GIS. Art Loring is currently active in the area while another group known as Seven Sisters Ventures also holds a CBR permit for the area.

North Unit

Lakes

- Bonney Lake is a mid sized lake that is linked to Fred Wright and Kwinageese Lakes as well as Swan Lakes by numerous creeks. Potential for a loop hut development.
- Damdochax is surrounded by interesting landscapes, high wildlife values including salmonids of several species, grizzly, wolves, goats, eagles, migrating waterfowl, high first nations values including grave sites, dwelling sites and contains a segment of the Telegraph trail including historic log cabins. The size of the area and the opportunities lend itself to an expansion of opportunities with consideration for the existing camp and fishing licensees in the vicinity.
- Canyon Lake is surrounded by interesting landscapes. First Nations report a trail between the Skeena and Nass Rivers through this valley.

River

- Skeena River north of the Sustut River is a major wildlife corridor and heritage route. Jackson Flats is a major junction. Possible but limited whitewater and kayaking opportunities.
- The Driftwood River has a high degree of recognition. The Fort St James LRMP reports it as suitable for wilderness canoeing.

Landbase

- The Yukon Telegraph Trail provides an opportunity to hike through and relive the life of a lineman as well as the First Nations traders who used much of the route before the telegraph line was established.
- The BCR rail grade north of the end of rail could provide potential for extended mountain biking or horse packing trips.
- The Shelf Ridge (links the Babine to the Skeena) is suitable for a linear hut system.
- Overland along the Damdochax from the Nass to the Skeena along First Nations heritage trails is suitable for a linear hut system.
- Along *Bowser Lake*. High scenic values, fishing and many opportunities provide an opportunity for a string of huts. Huts can link the glaciated valleys at the headwater (beside the GranducMine) to the lake.

Associated Products: Heritage culture hiking, animal assisted, horse riding, air tours and access, boating, canoeing, snowmobiling, dog sledding, ski touring and many other activities. The more varied and diverse the opportunities, the more successful a destination lodge or hut system can be over a longer period of time. Suitable locations include those that can provide for this diversity of products.

7.2.4 Market and Socio-economic Assessment

7.2.4.1 MARKETS

Demographic changes in key markets indicate a growing demand for this product in North America and internationally, especially among baby boomers. Research has shown that a significant component of the ecotourism market is attracted to smaller, intimate, adventure-type accommodations, including cabins and lodges.[32] In particular, experienced ecotourists cite a strong preference for this type of accommodation.

Soft Adventure Traveller versus Activity Enthusiast - The soft adventure traveller looks for a lodge that will provide the best overall "experience". This includes a combination of the accommodation, food and activities offered that are high-end and/or unique. The activity enthusiast will select a lodge based on its location and support for a particular activity. This is particularly relevant for activities such as fishing or backcountry skiing, which are highly dependent on having particular resources, features and conditions.

General Consumer versus Experienced Ecotourist[33] - Lodges are generally preferred by the experienced ecotourist, with 66 percent stating cabins as their preferred choice of accommodation, followed by lodges/inns at 60 percent and tent/camping at 58 percent. In contract, the general consumer prefers to stay in hotels/motels (56 percent), although as lodges become more upscale and comfortable, they will gain increasing popularity with the general consumer as well.

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[32] Catalogue of Exemplary Practices in Adventure Travel and Ecotourism, Pamela Wight and Associates, March 1999

[33] Greening of Remote Tourism Lodges, Pam Wight & Associates, 1994

Corporate versus Personal Traveller - Corporate travellers use lodges either for meetings with their own management teams and with clients and for incentive travel, which is used as a means to reward/motivate employees. This segment looks for amenities such as meeting and conference rooms, fully equipped with telephones and Internet access. Individual rooms may also be required to have data access. As well, they will look for activities that promote interaction between people, particularly if the purpose of the trip is for team building for managers or with clients. The personal traveller is looking for a unique location and activities to do with friends and/or family. This segment values the overall ambiance of the location as well as opportunity to have both privacy as desired and opportunity to meet and share experiences with other guests in common areas.

Regional competition for the lodge/resort market is intense as there is extensive development in the Canadian Rockies (Alberta and BC), Kootenays and Coastal regions. The lure of the large, popular national parks in the Rockies is a strong draw for the lodge/resort crowd. In the immediate area, there are numerous fishing lodges and although many do not cater to the ecotourist, there are few barriers of entry into that market since they already have major investments in capital.

The demand for the lodge/hut product in the Kispiox is low because the vast majority of current visitors are from the highway touring market. Existing lodges cater almost exclusively to sport fishermen. The ecotourist seeking a unique outdoor wilderness adventure within a lodge/hut setting is not currently represented in the Kispiox's visitor profile, not because the potential does not exist, but because there is very little product available.

7.2.4.2 IMPACTS/CONFLICTS

Visual quality is a critical component of the destination lodge experience. Visitors invariably expect a wilderness experience and the visual impacts of timber harvesting can have a deleterious affect on business. There is an expectation of wilderness by lodge visitors, particularly among the international market. This puts lodge development in direct conflict with forest harvesting activity and makes development in many southern areas of the Kispiox especially problematic.

7.2.4.3 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Tenure is an essential element of lodge/resort development on Crown land. The resort/lodge product will not attract the necessary investment dollars if there are uncertainties regarding land access and resource use. This may necessitate a Crown lease rather than just a Licence of Occupation from the BC Assets and Land Corporation, or undertake a private land purchase, to ensure some degree of control over the use of the facilities by other tour operators or independent visitors. The length of time it takes to get approval for a lease or license of occupation from BCALC and the uncertainty associated with the process increases the risk of new investment. Communities can help manage that risk by undertaking pre-assessment work on preferred sites and opportunities.

Another distinct possibility is lodge/hut development on Indian reserve lands. There are several reserves in the Kispiox with good proximity to recreational features and which have the potential for cultural heritage interpretation. More lodge/hut facility could attract visitors off Highway 16 and into some of the outlying areas.

Some lodges can be very self-sufficient and use very little public infrastructure. In the frontcountry, however, the lack of infrastructure, services, and labour supply can be a problem.

The trend toward a more full-service experience among visitors suggests that the lodge/resort style of holiday where the visitor does not have to make a series of purchase decisions once they have arrived will increase in popularity. Spas and retreats that focused on the business and small convention market but with an outdoor component could be viable. First Nations interpretation is virtually untapped by lodges and resorts and could significantly enhance the current profile.

The business is capital intensive, meaning market entry will be limited. While this will constrain competition, it also means development can be a slow process. Although outdoor adventure could be considered a theme in and of itself, the increasing number of lodges provincially will dilute this as a differentiating factor. Therefore, specialization will become more important for a lodge to succeed.

A lodge's impact on community and economic development can be very favourable for several reasons. First, they are primarily land-based, generating job and income opportunities for nearby communities through site development, investment and ongoing operations. Second, they increase the capacity for increased visitation to the region by adding to the facilities inventory. Third, they target market and draw in new visitors thus diversifying the local tourism market profile. Finally, they can extend partnership opportunities to existing operators for guiding or other services, thereby enhancing the viability of small businesses in the region.

7.2.4.4 OVERALL POTENTIAL

There are many opportunities for themed development in the Kispiox, as alpine, river and cultural heritage facilities could all be developed. Establishing linkages with existing tourism operators who have commercial recreation tenure for complementary activities (e.g. wildlife viewing, hiking, and kayaking) would help development. By being multi-activity and multi-season, lodges should be in a better position to manage their cash flow and staff.

Opportunity for a First Nations lodge for cultural interpretation and exposition are very positive. Linkages to 'Ksan or any number of heritage sites in the region could create a critical mass of tourism activity in the area. It could be linked to hiking, biking, trail riding, agri-tourism, cultural interpretation and wildlife viewing (salmon). However, some heritage sites will not be suitable for interpretation or development and tourism development policies and protocols would have to be drawn up so any new initiatives have the support of the local communities.

MARKET & SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA			
UNITS:		**South Unit**	**North Unit**
Markets	Demand	**Medium-High**: increasing demand for soft adventures with higher quality accommodation in remote settings.	
	Competition	**High**: extensive development and investments occurring nationally and provincially.	
	Overall potential	**High**: good access to features and theme development.	**Medium**: remoteness and lack of infrastructure limit opportunities.
Impact/ Conflict	Use	**High**: potential for conflict with forestry over visual impacts.	
	Community / Social	**Low-Medium**: few impacts if located in the backcountry.	
Business Development Needs	Crown tenure	**High**: Crown lease would be required unless private property or IR land was available.	
	Infrastructure	**Medium**: good infrastructure along Highway 16, but enhancements needed in most areas.	
	Capital	**Medium-High**: Huts can be constructed for as little as $20,000, or less, if "sweat equity" is contributed. Land, building and equipment costs could range from $150,000 to several million dollars for lodges/resorts.	
Level of community support		**High**: generally supported by all communities, actively supported by First Nations communities.	
Employment opportunities		**High**: potential for full range of tourism positions and spin-offs.	
Opportunities		Backcountry or river lodge (West Skeena, Kispiox) Hut-to-hut (Seven Sisters, Kispiox Range – Moonlit to Hazelton Peak) Lodges focused on First Nations interpretation (Skeena River, Gitsegucla)	Backcountry of river lodge (Damdochax, Canyon Lake) Lake hut system (Bonnery, Fred Wright and Kwinageese lakes) Hut development (Shelf Ridge, along the Damdochax, along Bowser Lake)

7.2.5 High Opportunity Areas

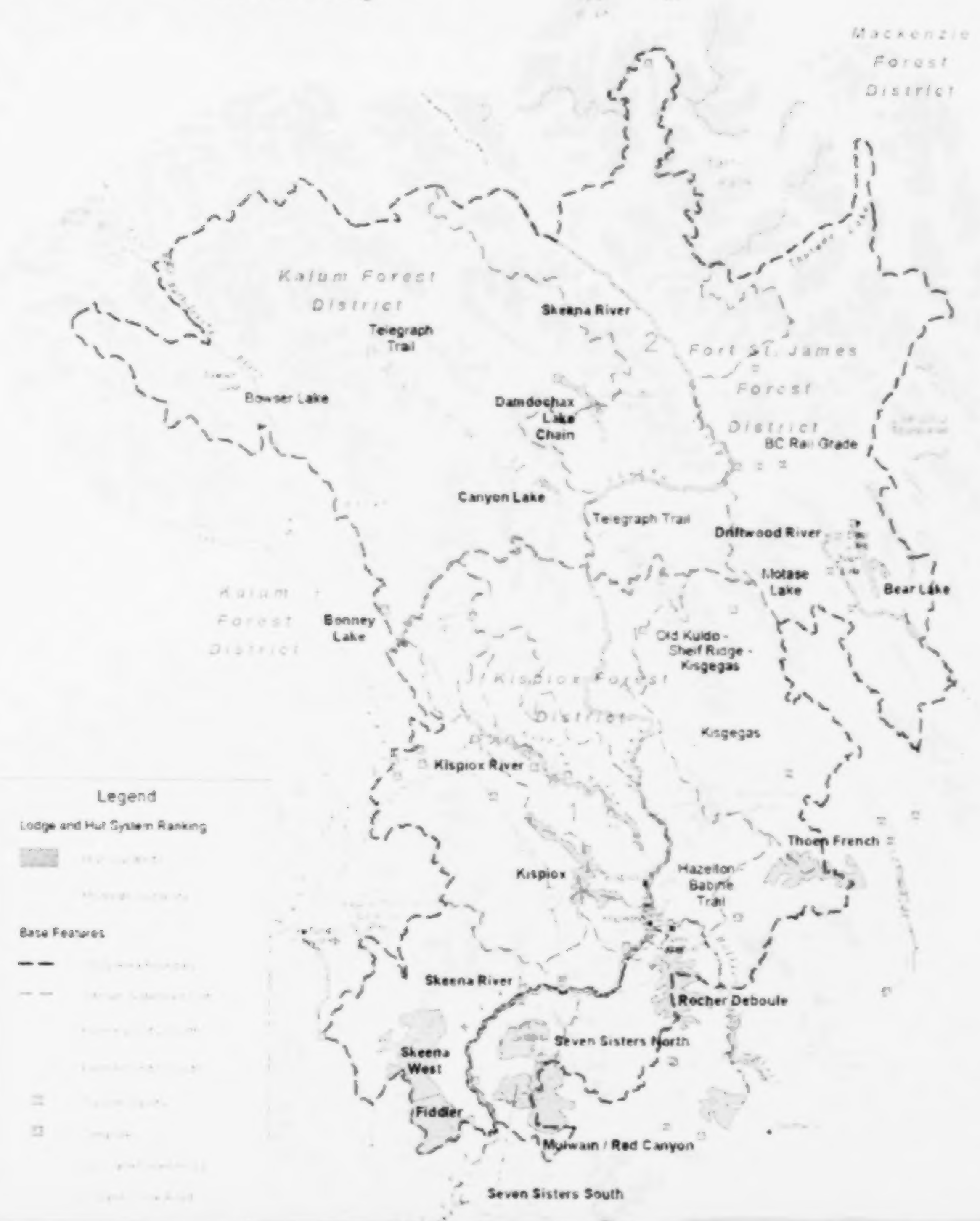
Polygon Name	Polygon Name
Skeena River	Fiddler
Kispiox River	Bonney Lake
Kispiox Range	Damdochax Lake
Seven Sisters	Canyon Lake
Rocher Deboule	Driftwood River
Skeena West	Bear Lake
Telegraph Trail	BCR grade
Shelf Ridge	

7.2.6 Destination Lodge / Hut System Map

On the following page is the tourism suitability map for the Destination Lodge / Hut System product (Exhibit 18).

Kispiox Tourism Opportunity Study

Destination Lodge and Hut System Suitability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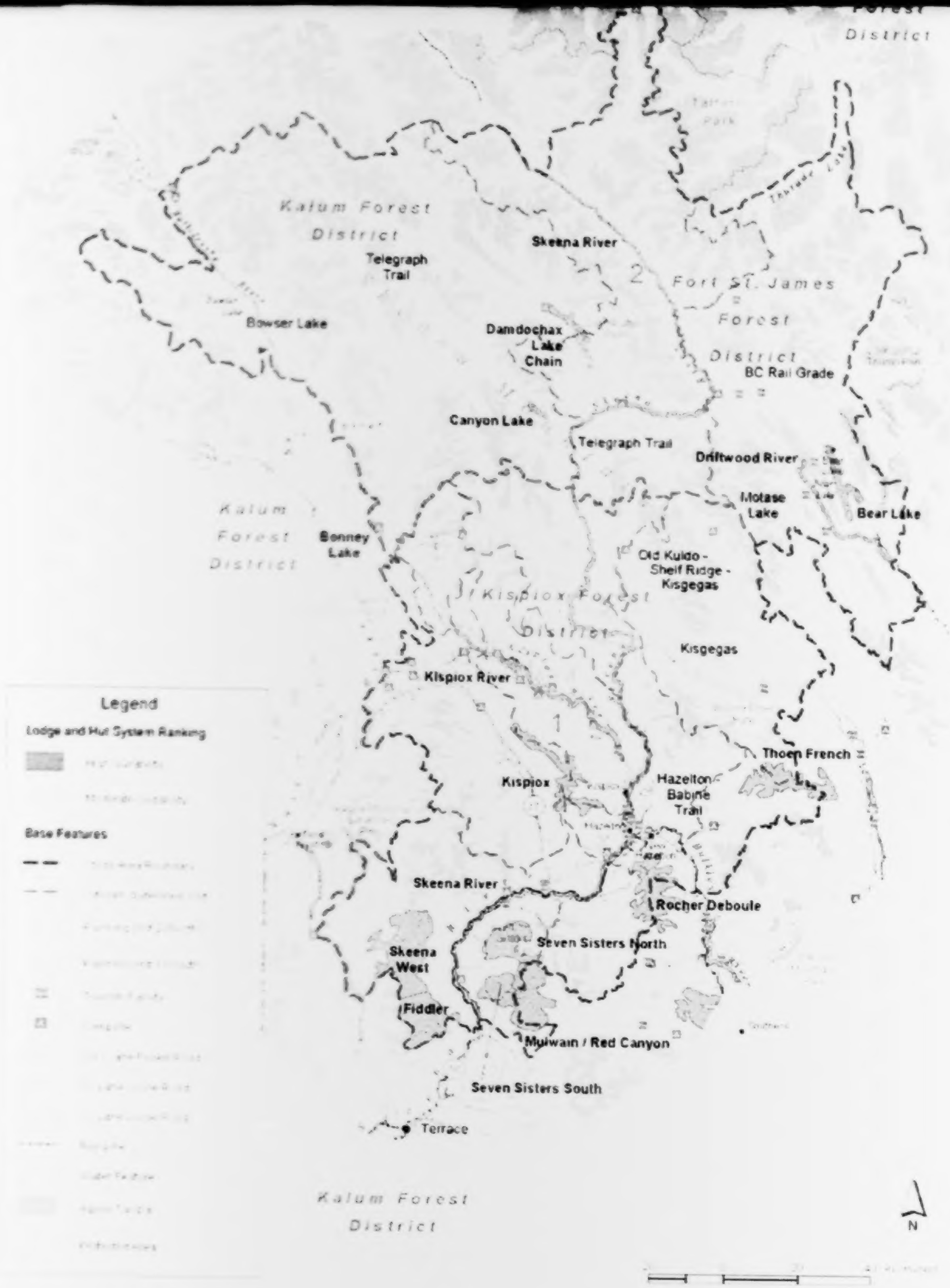
Mulwain / Red Canyon
Seven Sisters South
Legend
Lodge and Hut System Ranking
Base Features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Mulwain / Red Canyon
Seven Sisters South
Terrace
Kalum Forest
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Legend
Lodge and Hut System Ranking
Base Features

7.3 Fresh Water Activity: Non-motorized and Motorized

7.3.1 Description

The water activity product includes an array of recreation activities, including whitewater kayaking (adventure product), rafting, canoeing (non-motorized water product) and jet boating (motorized water product). Complementary features such as beaches, sport fish, waterfalls, rapids, pools, ledges, standing waves, other water features and recreation sites and water access allow for more diverse product development.

7.3.2 Regional SWOT Summary

Strengths	A wide variety of flatwater to whitewater in the district, an active community of local kayakers, a well-established whitewater shop with rentals. Whitewater stretches along the Bulkley and Babine provide for world class rafting. Strengths of the river include world class fishing, a range of natural settings, a range of whitewater, access to the river opportunities, and a long paddling season. A combination of wilderness lakes and accessible lakes add to the opportunities.
Weaknesses	The majority of the rivers are unsuitable for boating activities and in those suitable areas there are limited stretches of whitewater available. Opportunities for rafting on the Babine require considerable time to access.
Concerns	BC Parks is concerned that whitewater use on the Babine River may be approaching social carrying capacity – caps on use could occur in the future. A number of access points to the Bulkley river occur on either private and could be closed in the future. Continuous growth of use on the Bulkley may lead to deterioration of the river experience.

7.3.3 Resource Assessment

The Kispiox Study Area is noted for its rivers and lakes. The rivers dominate the region and include large rivers such as the Skeena (second largest in B.C.) and the Nass. The lakes in the Study Area are small to medium in size and offer an occasion for boating, swimming and lake fishing.

The primary opportunities associated with the rivers and lakes in the Study Area include:

- ***World class fishing:*** The rivers are internationally renowned for world class fishing. A decline in fish stock along the west coast and concerns for the preservation of specific fish stocks on the Skeena has led to a curtailment of commercial fishing at the mouth of the Skeena. This has led to higher quality recreational fishing on Skeena Tributaries.. There have been Coho closures on the rivers.
- ***Natural Settings including undammed rivers:*** The rivers have a range of settings that extend from the primitive (along the Babine) to the rural (along the Kispiox and Skeena). The views from the rivers range from predominantly natural to wilderness. None of the rivers are dammed.
- ***Range of whitewater:*** The rivers in the region provide a variety of whitewater classes suitable for all participant experience levels and allow for different activities including, rafting, kayaking, canoeing, drifting and jet boating. The range of whitewater includes:

  - the easy gradient and suitable family canoeing, tubing or rafting of the Kispiox, the lower Kitwanga, and the Driftwood River accessible from forest roads north of Fort St. James.
  - the whitewater of the Babine, Bulkley, Suskwa, Kitsuns, Kitseguecla, Sicintine, Duti and Skeena (upper access point from the Mosque air strip). These are a few of the rivers that are known for kayaking (and rafting). The many rivers of the northern part of the study area must be fully explored to ascertain their suitability for whitewater kayaking and possibly rafting. The Mount Remo Backcountry Club and Bulkley Valley Kayak Club are planning a joint project to classify and describe the rivers of surrounding Terrace, Hazelton and Smithers; and
  - A*ccess to the river opportunities* increases the allure of the associated products.

- ***Long paddling season:*** The rivers are noted for a paddling season that extends from March to October.
- ***"Wilderness Lakes":*** Swan Lake has been set aside as a non-motorized wilderness area. Numerous islands with a complex shoreline and good fishing compliment the opportunity. At present there are other lakes such as Gunanoot and Canyon Lakes that offer a wilderness experience. Access to Swan Lake can be achieved by road – via Brown Bear Lake – whereas the others must be reached by air.
- ***"Accessible lakes":*** The study area has lakes that are readily reached by road. These include Kitwancool Lake and the numerous little lakes that can be found along the Kispiox Valley.

The freshwater activity products can be linked to the culture and heritage of the region through interpretation and awareness building. The Gitxsan/Gitanyow First Nations people have historically derived their sustenance from the bounty of the land. The abundance allowed time for arts and ritual. The First Nations continued presence as a people and the subtle historical evidence of their relationship to the natural surroundings can heighten the feeling of mystery and wonder for the recreationist.

- The primary ***recreation rivers*** in the Study Area are primarily in the **South Unit**. The rivers in the **North Unit** are as a rule not suitable for boating activities due to high volume, extensive riffles and difficult sections. The recreation rivers in the Study area include:
- **Skeena River**: The second largest river in British Columbia, it begins south of the Spatzizi Plateau and terminates in the Pacific passing the communities of Hazelton, Terrace and Prince Rupert. There are three sections each with unique waters.

Segment	Activity	Grade	Description
Lower :Hazelton to west study boundary.	Rafting Jet boating Motor boating	1-2	Flat water rafting with cultural interpretation opportunities. Possible linkage with a road or rail tour.
Mid: Sicintine to Hazelton	Kayaking, Rafting, Drifting	3	The river is predominantly a 3.
Upper: Duti to Sicintine	Kayaking Rafting	3-5	From the Duti to Sustat the river is a class 2-3, followed by big water (class 3 to 5) to the Sicintine.

The **Bulkley River** between the Suskwa confluence and the Skeena confluence within the Kispiox Study Area is focused on rafting on the 33-kilometre Bulkley River Canyon. Coined as "one of BC's most exciting and scenic all day raft trips". The Bulkley Canyon on the Bulkley provides good whitewater areas.

Segment	Activity	Grade	Description
Lower: Suskwa River to Hazelton	Rafting, Kayaking	3-4	Rafting 45 minute ride to the river put-in on the Suskwa Forestry Road. with over 30 rapids. The river trip ends near Old Hazelton at scenic K'san Indian Village. Road access ("park and play")

The **Kispiox River** is located north of Hazelton. It begins in the Swan Lake/Kispiox River Provincial Park and merges with the Skeena. The river provides opportunities for drifting and canoeing and is internationally renowned for steelhead fishing. It also contains numerous features including pools, beaches, forest, meadows and is a major flyway for migratory birds (including the Sandhill Crane). A multi-day excursion with a string of campsites is ideal for this river. Heavy rains result in turbid waters. Potential for First Nations interpretation exists throughout this river, and particularly at the village of Kispiox.

Segment	Activity	Grade	Description
Swan Lake to Hazelton	Canoeing Drifting	2-3	An easy run with 3 sections, the most difficult extends between the bridge and Hazelton. There is a canyon somewhere above the Mitten Forestry bridge, which has more difficult water. The Sweetin Forest Recreation site is an easy and potentially the last access to the river

The **Suskwa River** is a small river with significant river recreation opportunities for whitewater enthusiasts. Easy access to class 3 and 4 rapids.

Segment	Activity	Grade	Description
Upper: Extends from 18 km to FS campground.	Kayaking	3	For intermediate kayakers the FS campground allow egress before the difficult class 4 sections.
Lower: From FS campground to Bulkley.	Kayaking Rafting	3-4	This section of river is best suited for the experienced kayaker and small rafts .

The **Babine River** is a 4 to 6 day wilderness river adventure in class 4 rapids. Coined as the "Valley of Eagles and Bears" the river is suitable for rafting and kayaking. Beginning in the Bulkley Forest District, the untouched landscapes are highlighted with the opportunity for viewing grizzly bears, the First Nations fishery at Kisgegas canyon and (with permission) visiting the seasonally inhabited Indian village at Kisgegas. The river corridor is a BC Provincial Park. Spectacular scenery, abundant wildlife and stirring whitewater make the Babine River provincially significant. The opportunities of the river are shared with the Bulkley Forest District.

Segment	Activity	Grade	Description
From Babine Lake to the Skeena River	Rafting Kayaking	4	A wilderness river well suited for rafting and kayaking within a protected area. Commercial rafting is restricted to a limited number of permits per year, other Restrictions to the number of visitors could apply in the future.

The **Nass River** extends to the Pacific from south of the Spatzizi Plateau. It passes the Nisgaa communities of Aiyansh, Greenville and Kincolith.

Segment	Activity	Grade	Description
Kalum Forest District northern boundary to west of the Kwinageese River.	Rafting	4	Big water, difficult passages and few access points make this section of the river less suitable for boating, rafting or kayaking.

Lower Kitsuns Creek above the confluence with the Kitsequecla is also known as a high quality kayaking area.

Between Moricetown and the Suskwa is **Porphyry Creek** also excellent for whitwater kayaking.

Bear River is noted as being suitable for canoeing. The significance of this river is increased in association with the values of Bear Lake.

The **Driftwood River** extends south to Talkla Lake and is noted for high numbers of wildlife and high fish values. Sections include the Tuwatenindlay Rapids. There is potential for rafting, jet boating and kayaking.

The **Squinquila River** is suitable for kayaking and is noted for fishing. It emerges from Motase Lake, a Class B fish lake.

The **Sustut**, **Kitsuns** and **Driftwood Rivers** are suitable for kayaking with differing skill levels. The rivers are remote and access is difficult. High skill levels and comprehensive planning are a necessity.

The ***recreationally significant lakes*** in the Study area include (most significant in **bold**):

Unit	Lake		Activity	Description
South	*Front country with Forest Service Sites:*	*Keynton (Bell)*	Canoeing, Camping, Fishing, Picnicking, Wildlife watching, Motorized boating use in some lakes.	Small lake with a small semi-open Forest Service campsite. Close and popular to the local communities. Near urban use problems..
		Derrick, Little Fish, Octopus and Elizabeth		Small lakes noted for fishing. Canoeing and boating opportunities. Forest Service campsites provide rustic opportunities. A number of these lakes have a problems with garbage, overuse and overstaying.
		Pentz and Mitten		Popular local lakes and day use sites.
	Kitwancool Lake:		Motorized boating, Canoeing, Fishing	Located along Highway 37 in the Cranberry Valley. The lake is readily accessed and provides a variety of recreation opportunities.
	Helen, Pentz and Affleck Lake complex		Canoeing, Fishing	A pocket wilderness that provides easy access to recreation opportunities within lake settings.
	Flatfish Lake to McCulley Creek		Canoeing, Fishing	Forested non-motorized area set on a plateau dotted with small lakes (including Hilltop, Greasetrail and Douse Lakes).
	Bonus		Canoeing, fishing	Located along Highway 37 north of the Cranberry River, very scenic, dock for launching canoes & fishing
	Swan Lake/Kispiox River Provincial Park		Canoeing, Fishing	A group of lakes in a wilderness setting within an established wilderness area. Single road entry. Many islands and complex shoreline heighten this lakes attraction as a canoeing destination.
	Damsumlo Lake		Canoeing, Fishing	An attractive lake that offers a wilderness setting. Marsh fringes and wet meadows. No road access. High insect populations.
	Gunanoot Lake		Canoeing, Fishing	A large presently remote lake that offers a wilderness setting. Marsh fringes. No road access. Destination lake.
	Sicintine Lake		Fishing, canoeing	An attractive small sub-alpine lake that falls within the Primitive wilderness of the Atna, Sicintine and Shelagyote Rivers. No road access. Views of the Atna and Shelagyote ranges.
North	***Damdochax Lake Chain***		Fishing, canoeing	Includes Damdochax Provincial Park, high wildlife and fisheries values, also high heritage values
	Canyon Lake		Fishing, canoeing	High wildlife values, high heritage values
	Bowser Lake		Canoeing	Large lake with forested shores with extensive harvesting.
	Bear Lake		Canoeing, fishing	High wildlife and fishing values.

Associated Products: Culture Interpretation and Nature Observation, Hut systems, Camping, Road tours increase the opportunities for drifting, motorized boating, canoeing and rafting.

7.3.4 Market and Socio-economic Assessment

7.3.4.1 MARKETS

Lakes/rivers activities include kayaking, rafting, canoeing and fishing. There is no single market profile for this product, but instead several distinct segments and sub-segments. Canoeing and river kayaking each have two sub-segments, recreational paddling and whitewater, the latter entailing more skill and experience by participants. Rafting in BC is generally conducted down whitewater sections of rivers, but can also entail floating. Freshwater fishing that occurs in streams, rivers, ponds or lakes. In BC, major species of interest include trout, char, salmon, steelhead and bass.

Kayaking and canoeing generally require a good fitness level, and have their strongest appeal among younger travellers. Kayaking/canoeing operators frequently include bird watching and nature observation as secondary activities. Kayaking/canoeing can also play a secondary role as part of other travel experiences that involve wilderness activities.

In Canada, river kayakers tend to be younger than ocean kayakers, between 20 and 44 years of age. The majority (60%) are male, and travel with friends (29%) or couples (28%). Participants are from Canada (82%), the U.S. (12%) and overseas (6%). The demand for kayaking has increased over the past decade as access to better quality equipment and instruction makes it easier to learn and become proficient at the sport.

The canoeing market differs from the kayak market in some important ways. Although many demographic characteristics are similar (the average canoe participant is under the age of 35 (53%) and male (62%)), they are much more likely to travel with friends (48%), and perhaps of most significance to commercial operators, are just as likely to be international visitors than Canadians. In 1996, forty-five percent of commercially guided canoeists were Canadian, while 31% were German and 14% American.[34]

Although not conclusive, Canadian visitor data does suggest that the river kayak product appeals mostly to Canadian participants and secondarily Americans, while the canoe product has a much stronger appeal for the German and American markets. In terms of absolute size, the market for canoeing is much larger than kayaking. Participation rates for river kayaking are among the lowest of all outdoor recreation activities.

There is extensive competition regionally and across Canada for canoeing and kayaking. Alberta Rockies, Kootenays, Thompson Okanagan and the Caribou offer quality river/lake experiences, with similar features to the Bulkley. One product that the study area cannot offer is the multi-day trip lake system linked by waterways and portages such as is available at Bowron Lakes. Wilderness river/lakes activities and new products such as voyageur canoeing are available in all provinces.

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[34] Adventure Travel and Ecotourism in Canada: Strategic Framework for Development, p.3-31, The Randolph Group, January 1997.

There is expected to be continued growth in the future for canoeing especially and, to a lesser extent, kayaking. Canoeing is part of the North American heritage and is relatively easy to learn. It is also a portable activity as participants can easily take their boats to any river that is accessible by vehicle. River kayaking is a more demanding activity requiring considerable skill and higher levels of risk. Consequently it will probably grow more slowly than canoeing.

7.3.4.2 IMPACTS/CONFLICTS

Clients on commercially-led lake paddling trips are looking for a sense of isolation and wilderness. Typically, they do not want to hear or see motorized watercraft, highly altered landscapes or large-scale evidence of commercial harvesting. For many areas of the Kispiox, though, such conflicts are inevitable and will compromise tourism potential. This is especially true of the highly altered landscapes in the southern portion of the forest district and along many stretches of the Sustut, Kispiox, Taylor and upper Skeena rivers.

Sport fishermen and commercial guides very heavily utilize the Kispiox and Babine rivers and there are concerns that capacity limits are being reached.

7.3.4.3 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Crown land tenure is generally not an issue with river and lake operators in the region as the frequency of trips do not warrant the associated time and cost. If an operator uses a specific land feature such as a beach or camp on a regular basis then CR tenure will be required. Also, if there is restricted access to a lake, then specific tenure for access or shoreline use areas for activities like camping and picnicking is required.

Whether canoeing, kayaking, rafting or fishing, the development of the lake/river product has to be tied to some outstanding recreational feature, aesthetic appeal or valued secondary activity. Infrastructure is also important, as attracting participants and enthusiasts will require the development of more amenities to encourage stopovers. While this does not necessarily translate into high costs, minimum levels of access for put-ins and take-outs are essential. Good signage, as well as shuttling, supplies and rental services to self-guided users would also assist development.

More vertical integration of product design and marketing is required, including raising awareness of the potential of lakes and rivers among BC residents (i.e. enthusiasts who are activity-oriented travellers).

7.3.4.4 OVERALL POTENTIAL

There is moderate potential in the soft adventure/participant category for domestic, short-haul and German markets. All of these markets are seeking a broader outdoor adventure experience and will decide to participate in recreational paddling once in the region. The Kispiox has a range of close-in/remote adventures. Native cultural interpretation, nature observation, wildlife viewing and fishing are also attractants for these markets. The German market, especially, is interested in wildlife viewing. Multi-activity packaging and interpretation is essential.

The major constraining factor is a lack of grade 3+ water that would attract enthusiasts and adventure seekers. Also the area does not boast a lakes series with connecting waterways (rivers, streams) and portages that are usually preferred over single, isolated large lakes. Lakes connected in such a manner may provide opportunities for multi-day wilderness paddling trips. This should focus attention more on the casual participant interested in the softer, short duration adventures. Kayaking, rafting and fishing will be of more interest to the existing regional and short-haul travellers (western US and Canada) to the region, more so than canoeing.

The ability to package sport fishing, nature observation, historical interpretation with boating activities can help operators diversify, but avoidance of high use locations will be necessary to minimize conflicts with other users.

MARKET & SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA

UNITS:		South Unit	North Unit
Markets	Demand	**Medium**: rising participation rates, especially amongparticipants (as opposed to hard enthusiasts).	
	Competition	**Medium-High**: several areas provincially with excellent river/lake systems for canoeing, kayaking and rafting.	
	Overall potential	**Medium**: floating paddling adventures major rivers linked to other activities. Altered landscapes a concern.	**Low**: lack of access and infrastructure a barrier.
Impact/ Conflict	Use	**Medium**: multiple users on major rivers, with carrying capacity concerns (Babine and Kispiox rivers). Extensive fishing activity. Potential for conflict with motorized river users	
	Community / Social	**Low**: relatively low impacts generated by non-motorized users.	
Business Develop-ment Needs	Crown tenure	**Low**: needed only for repeated camping.	
	Infrastructure	**Medium**: put -ins, take-outs and camping areas needed on more remote rivers, while basic services and amenities required in all areas.	
	Capital	**Low**: canoes, kayaks, camping/cooking gear.	
Level of community support		**Medium**: recognized in tourism plans, lake/river activities valued by residents.	
Employment opportunities		**Low-Medium**: opportunities for guiding, shuttling and hospitality positions dependent on volumes.	
Opportunities		• Multi-day paddling and rafting trips (Kuldo to Hazelton) • Marina/dock on Skeena River in Hazelton. • Multi-activity day trips at Bulkley Canyon. • Small lake paddling, fishing and camping tours along the Kispiox River. • Rafting, fishing, wildlife viewing and heritage interpretation (e.g. petroglyphs) along the Babine River corridor. • Partnerships with existing rafting operators. • Shuttling services	• Wilderness Rafting tours on the upper Skeena and the Sustut rivers. • Guiding opportunities and partnerships with existing lodges in the Sustut. • Small lake fishing tours in the Nass area. • Linkages to cultural interpretation at Gunanoot Lake.

7.3.5 High Opportunity Areas

7.3.5.1 WHITEWATER

Polygon Name
Babine River
Bulkley River
Suskwa River

7.3.5.2 FLATWATER

Polygon Name
Kispiox River
Kitwancool River
Kitwancool Lake
Swan Lake
Damdochax Lake Chain
Bear Lake
Bear River

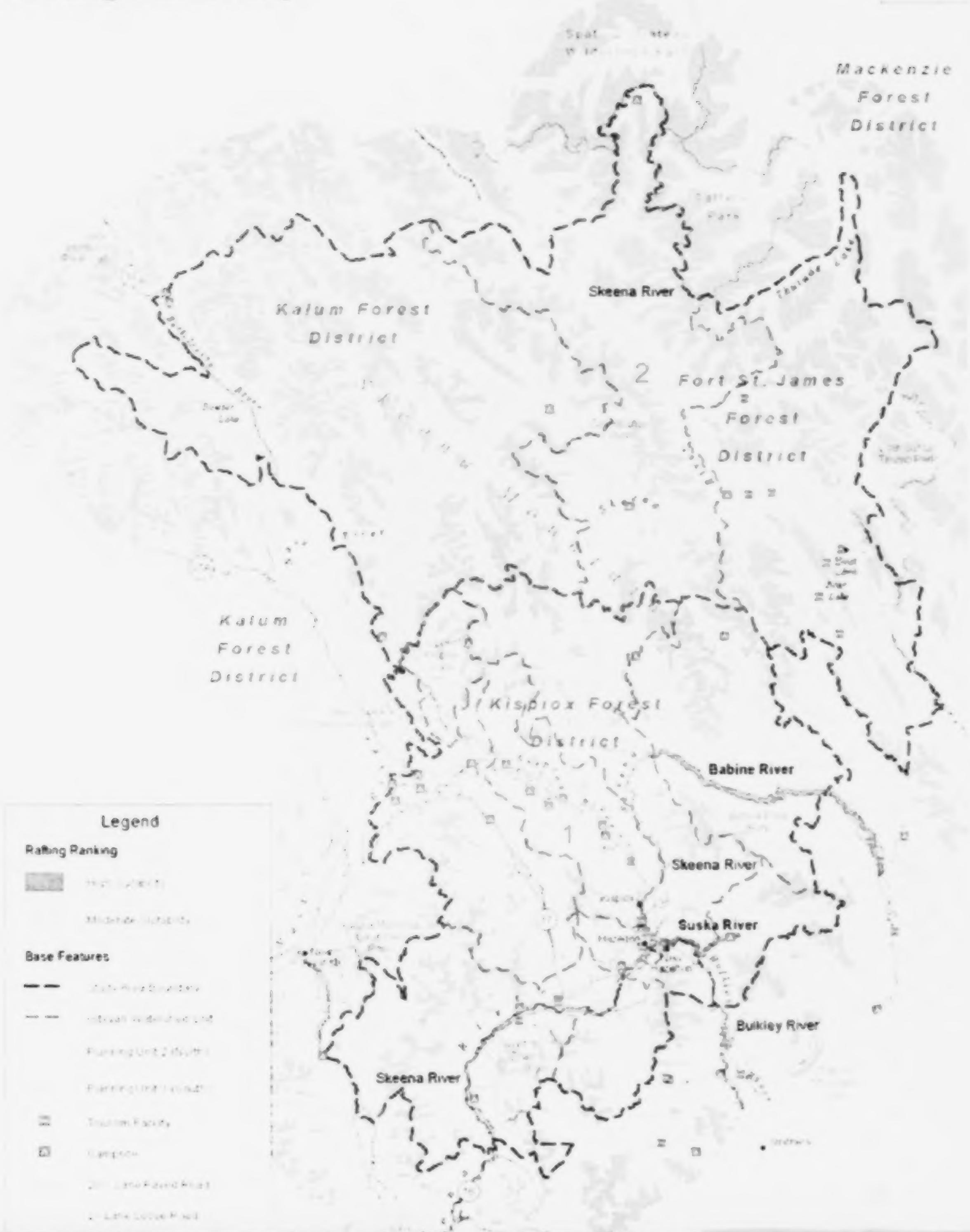
7.3.6 Fresh Water Activity: Non-motorized and Motorized Maps

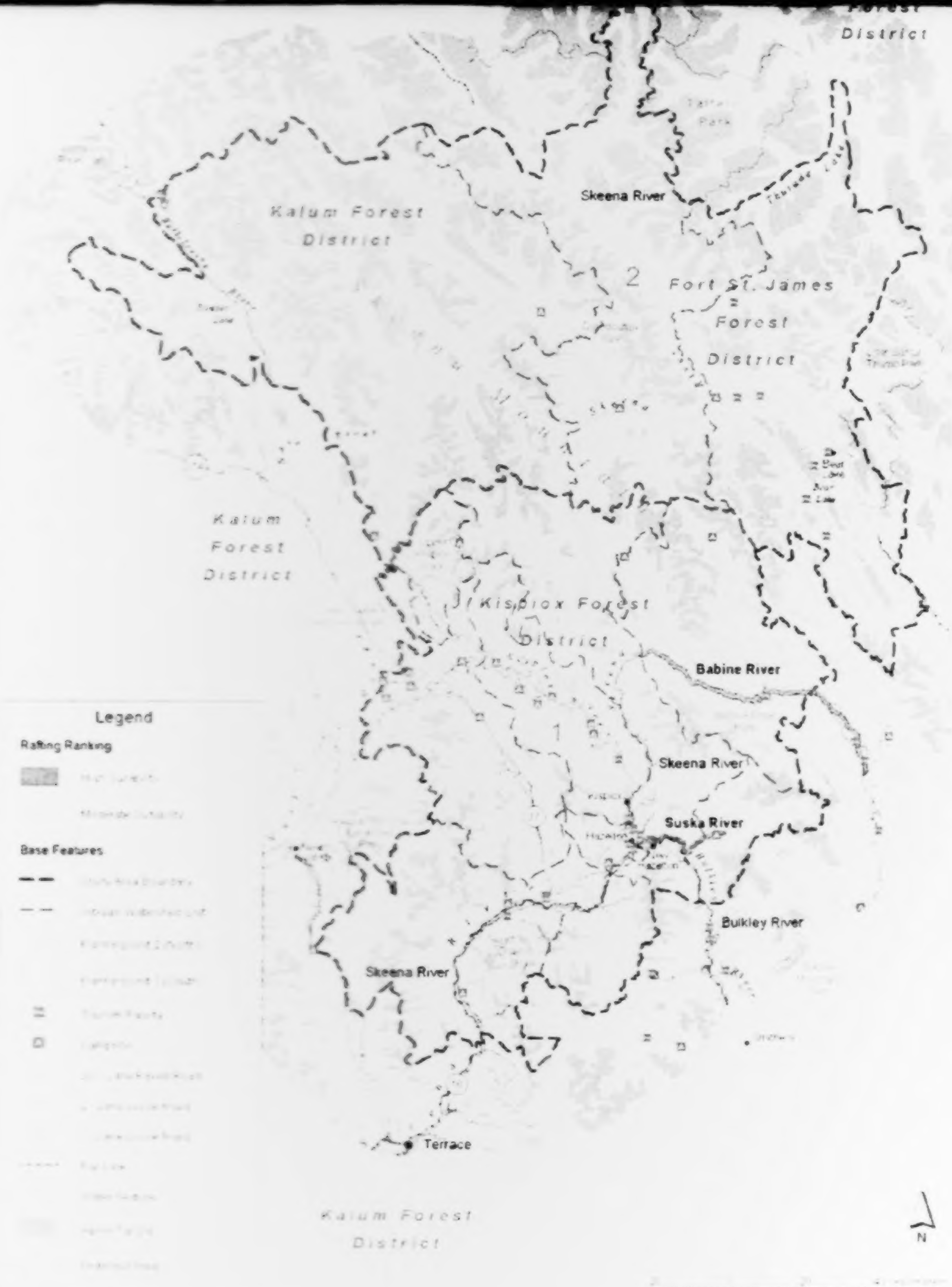
On the following pages are the tourism suitability maps (3) for the Fresh Water Activity: Non-motorized and Motorized products (***rafting / drifting & canoeing / kayaking***).

Kispiox Tourism Opportunity Study

Rafting Suitability

BRITISH COLUMBIA

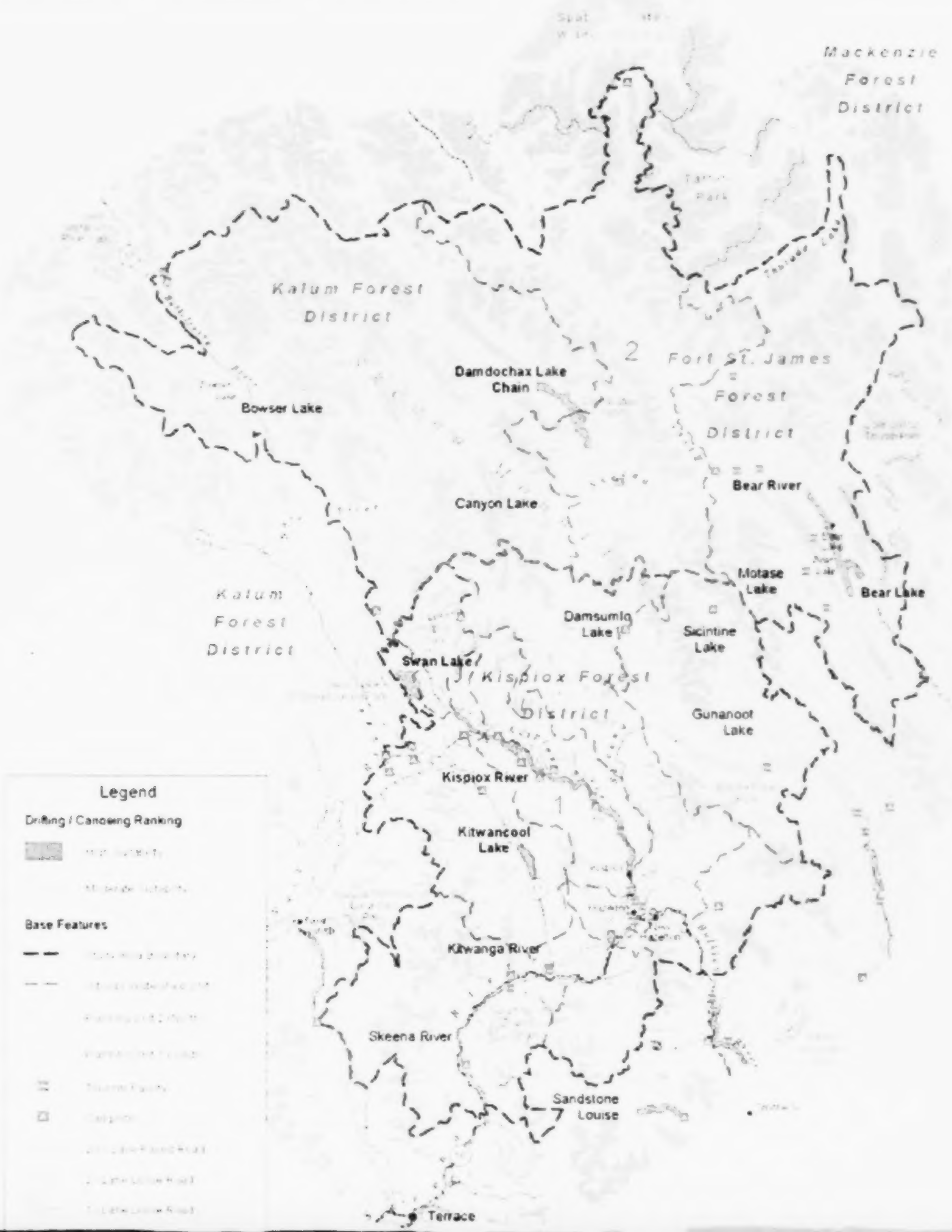

Mackenzie Forest District
Kalum Forest District
Kalum Forest District
Fort St. James Forest District
Kispiox Forest District
Skeena River
Babine River
Skeena River
Suskwa River
Bulkley River
Skeena River
2
1
Legend
Rafting Ranking
High Suitability
Moderate Suitability
Base Features
Study Area Boundary
Planning Unit 2 (North)
Planning Unit 1 (South)
Tourism Facility
Campsite
2+ Lane Paved Road
1+ Lane Loose Road

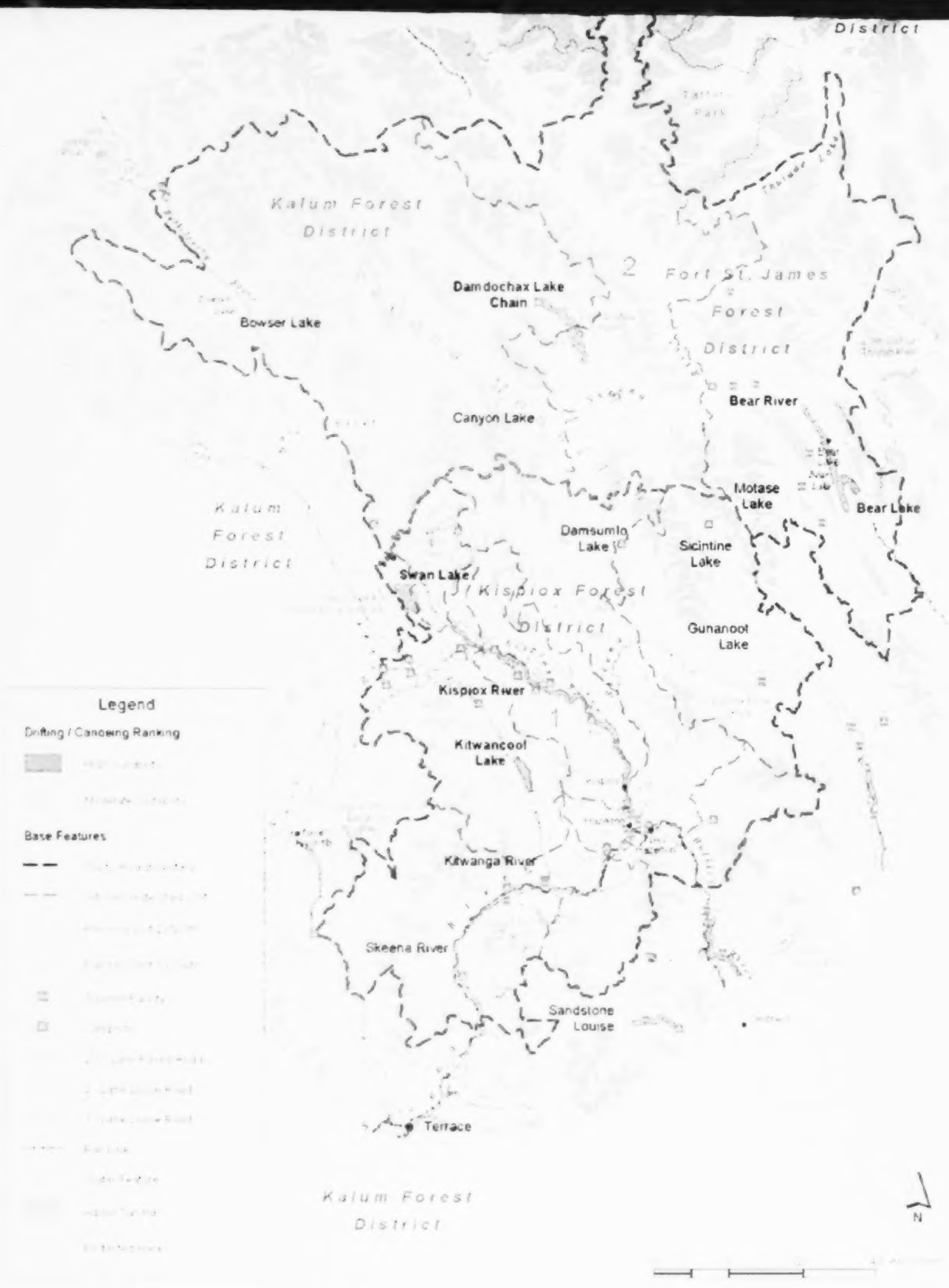

Forest
District
Skeena River
Kalum Forest
District
2
Fort St. James
Forest
District
Kalum
Forest
District
Kispiox Forest
District
Babine River
1
Skeena River
Suska River
Bulkley River
Skeena River
Terrace
Kalum Forest
District
N
Legend
Rafting Ranking
High Suitability
Moderate Suitability
Base Features
Study Area Boundary
Tourism Facility
Campsite

1/8

Kispiox Tourism Opportunity Study

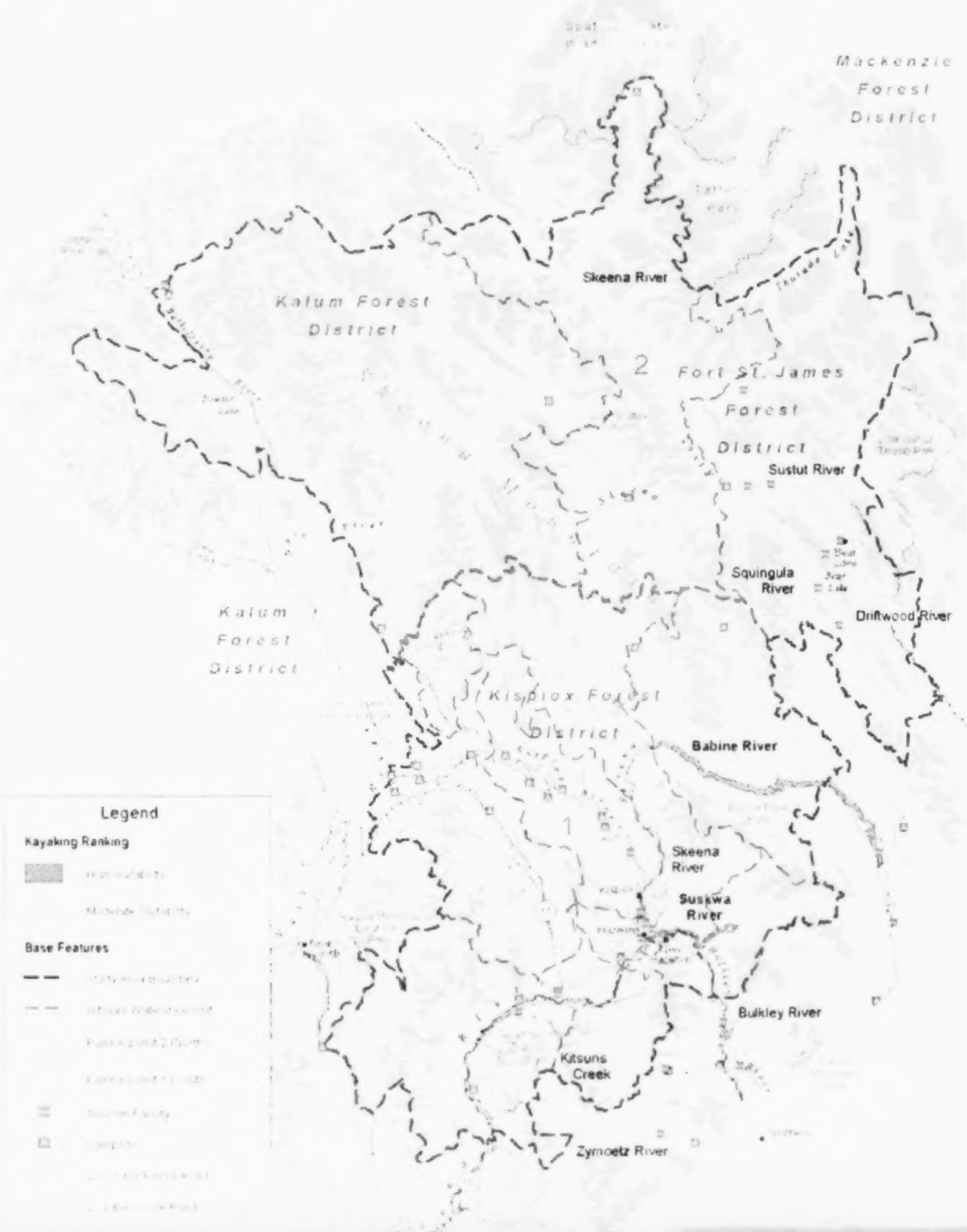
Drifting / Canoeing Suitability

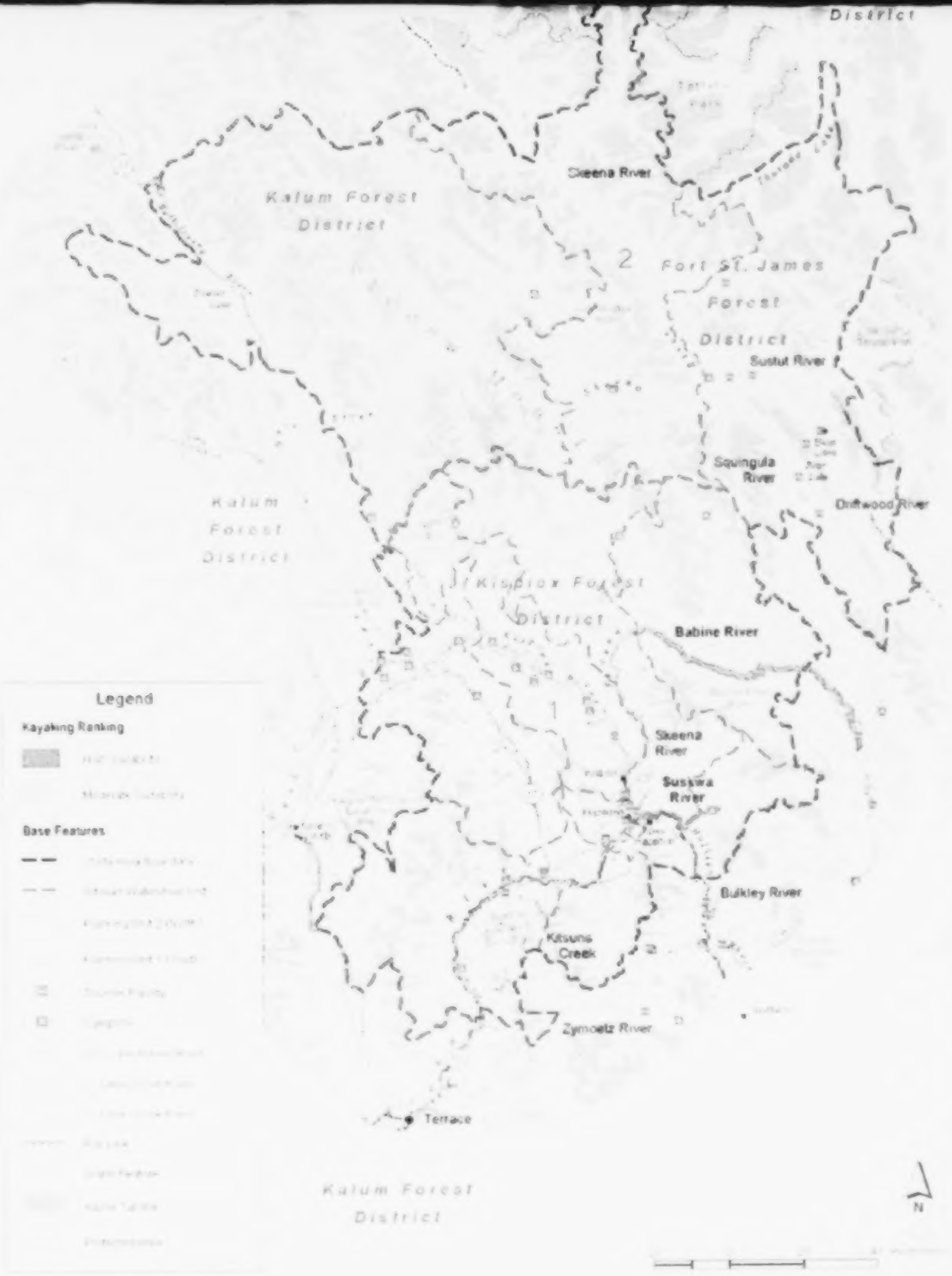

Mackenzie Forest District
Kalum Forest District
2
Fort St. James Forest District
Damdochax Lake Chain
Bowser Lake
Bear River
Canyon Lake
Motase Lake
Bear Lake
Kalum Forest District
Damsumlo Lake
Sicintine Lake
Swan Lake
Kispiox Forest District
Gunanoot Lake
Kispiox River
1
Kitwancool Lake
Kitwanga River
Skeena River
Sandstone
Louise
Terrace
Legend
Drifting / Canoeing Ranking
High Suitability
Moderate Suitability
Base Features
Tourism Facility
Campsite


District
Kalum Forest District
2
Fort St. James Forest District
Damdochax Lake Chain
Bowser Lake
Bear River
Canyon Lake
Motase Lake
Bear Lake
Kalum Forest District
Damsumlo Lake
Sicintine Lake
Swan Lake
Kispiox Forest District
Gunanoot Lake
Kispiox River
1
Kitwancool Lake
Kitwanga River
Skeena River
Sandstone Louise
Terrace
Kalum Forest District
N
Legend
Drifting / Canoeing Ranking
Base Features
Rail Line
Water Feature

Kispiox Tourism Opportunity Study

Kayaking Suitability


Mackenzie Forest District
Skeena River
Kalum Forest District
2
Fort St. James Forest District
Sustut River
Squingula River
Driftwood River
Kalum Forest District
Kispiox Forest District
Babine River
1
Skeena River
Suskwa River
Bulkley River
Kitsuns Creek
Zymoetz River
Legend
Kayaking Ranking
High Suitability
Moderate Suitability
Base Features
Study Area Boundary
Planning Unit 2 (North)
Planning Unit 1 (South)
Tourism Facility
Campsite


District
Skeena River
Kalum Forest District
2
Fort St. James Forest District
Sustut River
Squingula River
Driftwood River
Kalum Forest District
Kispiox Forest District
Babine River
1
Skeena River
Suskwa River
Bulkley River
Kitsuns Creek
Zymoetz River
Terrace
Kalum Forest District
Legend
Kayaking Ranking
Moderate Suitability
Base Features
N

7.4 Front and Mid Country Adventure

7.4.1 Description

The Front and Mid Country Adventure Product is focused on the recreational enthusiast. The activities identified are those specific to the resources available to the population and access centers within the study area, these include whitewater kayaking, rafting, ski mountaineering, mountaineering, rock climbing, downhill mountain biking and paragliding.

Whitewater kayaking and rafting for the skill level proposed in this product requires at least a class 3 river. "Play" areas benefit the experience.

Ski Mountaineering and mountaineering is about climbing mountains. It is "more than climbing, panoramic views and wilderness experience. It is also a challenge, risk, and hardship"[35]. It requires knowledge in the tools and techniques of camping, navigation, belaying, rappelling, glacier travel, safety, rescue, and climbing on rock, snow and ice. Ski mountaineering is not limited to the winter. Areas that are suitable for this activity during the non-winter months are those areas with extensive icefields and glaciers, requiring the use of skis when traversing these areas. These sections of high country require knowledge of winter camping and travel and excellent physical stamina to meet the challenges.

Associated to mountaineering is ***rock climbing***. A localized activity it takes place on the rock faces of boulders and big walls. It shares the knowledge of the tools and techniques of mountaineering with a focus on climbing rock either through "freestyle" or with ropes.

Mountain biking particularly on difficult single track gnarly trails is increasing in importance for the "extreme" mountain biking enthusiast. Included in this set are the "downhill" mountain bikers. Whereas the classic mountain bike is built to be light and strong and to be used in a variety of trails from steep hills to rolling terrain the "downhill" mountain bikes are for navigating down the steep gnarly trails and are not designed for going uphill. Helicopters offer access opportunities to summits and staging areas.

7.4.2 Regional SWOT Summary

Strengths	Challenging recreation features close to staging areas suitable for a range of adventure skill levels.
Weaknesses	Provincially repeatable features and corresponding opportunities. Attracting non-regional clients is made more difficult with high air fares, as the area is not well known in the adventure community. Lack of basic service infrastructure in key climbing areas.
Concerns	Remote/undisturbed areas essential for wilderness type experience are decreasing in area as industrial logging continues, particularly in the South Unit.

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[35] From *Mountaineering: the freedom of the hills*, p. 14

7.4.3 Resource Assessment

The centers of Hazelton, New Hazelton and Kitwanga have adventure opportunities that are readily accessible and available within a short distance. All areas are accessible by either Highway 16 or 2 wheel drive forest road. Most require travelling by trail to access. Good trails are important requirements for the land based products and access to waterways for water based products.

This grouping of adventure products allows the communities a focus in providing the necessary amenities and support toward the successful participation. The activities and the areas in which they can take place include:

Whitewater kayaking and rafting: The Bulkley and the lower Suskwa rivers provide tremendous opportunities for this activity. Lower Kitsuns creek above the confluence with the Kitsequecla is also known as a high quality kayaking area. These opportunities are identified under the section discussing Freshwater Non-Motorized Opportunities.

7.4.3.1 MOUNTAINEERING (AND SKI MOUNTAINEERING):

The rugged peaks with glaciers, glaciated cirques, matterhorns, solid rock cliffs and steep slopes of the Seven Sisters, Rocher Deboule and Mt. Thomlinson offer excellent mountaineering opportunities that are readily accessed from the population centers.

Ski mountaineering is an opportunity available in the Seven Sisters but limited in the Rocher Deboule. A high traverse can be undertaken between the Suskwa Valley and Mt Seaton near Moricetown. Outstanding peaks include Hagwilget Peak.

Glaciers on Mt. Thomlinson, Seven sisters and Rocher Deboule..

Cirques / bowls can be found in Hazelton Peak, Thomlinson Massif, North end Rocher Deboule Range, Seven Sisters.

7.4.3.2 ROCK CLIMBING::

Locations include the Hagwilget Bridge site, Stekyodenm, Bulkely Gate and the Suskwa Valley near the forestry bridge There are bolted routes at each of these sites with the work undertaken by volunteers in the community.

The most popular area is Hagwilget Bridge which contains many “top-rope” options. The routes are not long (most under 30 metres) but access is excellent, proximity to population centres is good and early season use is possible (March-April). These factors have lead to the site being used as a popular training area.

The Stekyoden route is recently established, very technical (5.12 crux) and extended, possibly involving bivouacs.

7.4.3.3 MOUNTAIN BIKING::

Locations for the more "extreme" section for mountain biking include Rocher Deboule.

Associated Products include rental shops, guiding, training courses, air access, hut systems, and air access opportunities.

7.4.4 Market and Socio-economic Assessment

7.4.4.1 MARKETS

The most recent data available on commercial recreation clients has lumped mountaineering and rock climbing as a single market. Canadian commercial operators have found that participants in these activities are generally younger males (approximately two thirds are males younger than 34), mostly from Canada (84%) and the US (12.7%), and travelling solo. By and large, this is not a family-oriented or group activity.[36]

The US data reflects the Canadian experience. Fully one third of all participants are between the age of 16 and 24.[37] Traditional rock climbing tends to be more popular than alpine mountaineering, which attracts 45% of all participants to this sport.[38] Alpine mountaineering and other forms of climbing are not mutually exclusive recreation categories. Many activities overlap and participants will regularly undertake more than one activity on a trip.

Like climbing and mountaineering, the rafting market is fairly young, with two-thirds being between 20 and 44 years of age. The majority (55.1%) are male and the tendency is to travel with friends (41%) or in couples (24.7%). Among Canadian rafting operators, two thirds of customers are Canadian, 20% American and the remaining 15% from overseas. (Kayaking is profiled in the Freshwater Activity profile later in this report).

For climbing and mountaineering it is important to understand the different market segments because they can be quite different in terms of product preference. The following market segments are based on two primary characteristics, the number of times a year participated in the activity, and the level of personal risk sought from the activity. The enthusiast has been defined as the most active one-third participants by number of times they participate in the activity. By this definition, they are more likely to provide opportunities for repeat business for tour operators, but at the same time, more experienced enthusiasts are more inclined to set out on their own. If using a guide, they will look for technical instruction and the experience and ability to make difficult, well-informed decisions. Enthusiasts also go on longer trips – while they number approximately one-third of participants, they account for 74 percent of days spent mountaineering[39] They often desire a natural, less-catered experience which includes less comfortable shelter such as tents and less dependence on mechanical support. These participants are generally younger, outdoors enthusiasts.[40] This group may also include the risk seeker who participates in mountaineering and climbing as a way to encounter situations where there is significant uncertainty bringing about the potential for danger or failure.

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[36] Adventure Travel and Ecotourism in Canada: Strategic Framework for Development, p.3-31, The Randolph Group, January 1997.

[37] Human Powered Outdoor Recreation, State of the Industry Report, Outdoor Recreation Council of America, 1997.

[38] ORCA Outdoor Industry Distribution Study, Leisure Trends Group, 1997.

[39] Human Powered Outdoor Recreation, State of the Industry Report, Outdoor Recreation Council of America, 1997.

[40] The Sea to Sky CBR Opportunities Study, p.46.

Participants, on the other hand, are looking to focus on the physical and mental challenge, as opposed to develop technical expertise in areas such as knot tying. Participants are using guides as a way of gaining access to an activity they do not conceive of being able to do on their own. They are looking for the guide to ensure their safety and reduce the risk of the activity and the need to go through a steep learning curve to perform the activity. In many cases, participants see this activity as a one-time experience, although sometimes the enjoyment of the experience may result in participants looking to become enthusiasts. Participants generally do not do as much research before arriving at the destination, relying instead on the operator to have this information readily available. They are generally older (baby boomers), who are willing to pay for comfortable lodging and other amenities, while getting the feeling of personal challenge through an activity in the mountains.

There is extensive competition from well known international destinations such as the Alps, South America, the Pacific Northwest of North America and California for the climbing and mountaineering participant. Neither Canada nor BC have a significant share of the international or North American markets for climbing. Recent estimates of only 0.2% of the North American market for climbing shows just how far Canadian operators have to go in attracting more business. Even on a regional basis, the Kispiox is not considered a climbing destination on a par with the Canadian Rockies, Squamish and Skaha each of which draws from short-haul markets in the Pacific Northwest. Many other areas have much more advanced infrastructure, products and marketing programs geared toward hard and soft demanding mountaineers and climbers. Importantly, the absence of a hut system is a disadvantage for the mountaineering product in the Kispiox.

7.4.4.2 IMPACTS/CONFLICTS

Conflicts between climbers and mountaineers and other users are not common as the terrain is quite specific to this activity. However, resource extraction (logging) nearby can be a visual and aesthetic deterrent to participants. Rock climbing can be focused on relatively small activity areas where conflicts with other users are likely to be minimal.

Conflicts between rafters/kayakers and other users are more common. The presence of motorized watercraft, highly altered landscapes or large-scale evidence of commercial harvesting does not help product quality.

7.4.4.3 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Commercial mountaineering operators require access to the high alpine in the summer where conflicts with the forest industry and other recreation users will be at a minimum. Regardless, some participants may perceive viewscapes altered by industrial activities negatively and this must be taken into consideration. The identification and use of preferred sites on a regular basis will require CR tenure. In order to assure a quality trip experience, operators may require several locations so they can react to constantly changing weather and safety conditions.

Mountaineering also requires a lot of technical (and expensive) equipment. The participants usually supply personal gear, but tents, cooking gear, food and safety equipment are the responsibility of the operator or guide. Self-contained camps are common, but a well-located alpine or sub-alpine hut is a definite advantage for expeditions. Base operations with proximity to transportation (helicopter or vehicle) are also required. Accommodation and food services are often necessary at the beginning and end of trips. Qualified guides and instructors are prerequisite for commercial participation in this activity. A climbing gym or easily accessible climbing area for training and instructions can be an advantage. The absence of a hut system in the region is a disadvantage.

Mountaineering has been made more accessible through the use of helicopters, snowmobiles and glacier ski planes. Operators can appeal to the softer adventure market by using motorized transportation and superior accommodation facilities to offset trip durations and safety concerns. This is what heli-ski operators have done to create summer capacity for their facilities. In catering to the soft adventure participant and emphasizing the comforts of lodges and gourmet meals, clients are given the opportunity to "experience" the mountains and the thrill of summiting, without having to learn the hard, technical skills of mountaineering and climbing.

Rockclimbing requires little in the way of infrastructure and would be less dependent on CR tenure. Some benefits may be gained by having good access trails, and toilet facilities for the more heavily used areas. A survey of rockclimbing visitors in Squamish indicated that basic infrastructure were at the top of the list of climber needs. Improving washroom facilities, clean drinking water, garbage disposal, camping and shower facilities, parking, firewood, signage and visitor information were suggested as ways of improving the area.[41] Development of a climbing product in the Kispiox could be predicated on these facilities.

For canoeing and kayaking, crown land tenure is generally not an issue as the frequency of trips do not warrant the associated time and cost. If an operator uses a specific land feature such as a beach or camp on a regular basis then CR tenure will be required. Also, if there is restricted access to a lake, then specific tenure for access or shoreline use areas for activities like camping and picnicking is required.

Whitewater kayaking or rafting requires higher-grade water as well as access to some outstanding recreational feature, aesthetic appeal or valued secondary activity. Infrastructure is also important, as attracting participants and enthusiasts will require the development of more amenities to encourage stopovers. While this does not necessarily translate into high costs, minimum levels of access for put-ins and take-outs are essential. Good signage, as well as shuttling, supplies and rental services to self-guided users would also assist development.

Because of the risk inherent in both climbing and mountaineering, commercial operators must emphasize safety and be able to gauge ability and energy level of each customer. This means hiring experienced guides/instructors with certification in climbing, first aid, medical and leadership training, selecting routes appropriate for customers that provide challenge without undue risk and establishing rules and procedures for behaviour and decision-making during the trip. Although safety is less an issue when canoeing or kayaking, experienced and successful operators nevertheless employ experienced guides and safety programs.

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[41] Economic Impact of Rockclimbing and Windsurfing, Sea to Sky Economic Development Commission & Festivals BC, Summer 1992.

7.4.4.4 OVERALL POTENTIAL

There is good potential to expand the adventure product in the Kispiox. Providing basic infrastructure, as well as teaching and instruction, will be the challenge however, as all of these sports have an "extreme" component. The proximity of the climbing and river resources to Highway 16 means communities that develop infrastructure and tourism services should be able to make them available to other travel markets.

MARKET & SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA				
UNITS:		**Hazelton-Kispiox**	**Babine-Kuldo**	**Nass-Sustut**
Markets	Demand	**Low**: small market but growing in some areas, especially among soft adventurers		
	Competition	**Medium**: southwest BC, Canadian Rockies, Pacific Northwest. Many areas with more advanced development		
	Overall potential	**Low**: some areas with convenient access could be targeted for rock climbing by participants		**Low**: Some mountaineering potential in Nass alpine
Impact/ Conflict	Use	**Low**: one commercial operator servicing the entire Northwest region		
	Community / Social	**Low**: remote activity, rarely interacts with other uses		
Business Development Needs	Crown tenure	**High**: high value markets require certainty of access and quality experience		
	Infrastructure	**Low-Medium**: mountaineering emphasis is on wilderness experience, close-in climbing will require some basic amenities and services		
	Capital	**Medium:** camping/cooking gear, safety equipment, base camp, maybe hut or lodge, well-trained guides		
Level of community support		**Medium**: increased participation would increase business at local restaurants, campgrounds and other visitor facilities		
Employment opportunities		**Medium**: business development will increase need for seasonal guides		
Opportunities		▪ Staging areas for rock and ice climbing (China Creek/Suskwa area, Bulkley Gate, Stekyoden, Hagwilget Bridge) ▪ Mountaineering (Seven Sisters, Rocher Deboule, Mt Thomlinson) ▪ Commercial climbing wall or gym (Hazelton) ▪ Whitewater paddling (Bulkley, Kitsegucla, lower Kitsuns, lower Suskwa)		▪ Huts or hut system for a mountaineering tour (Nass)

7.4.5 High Opportunity Areas

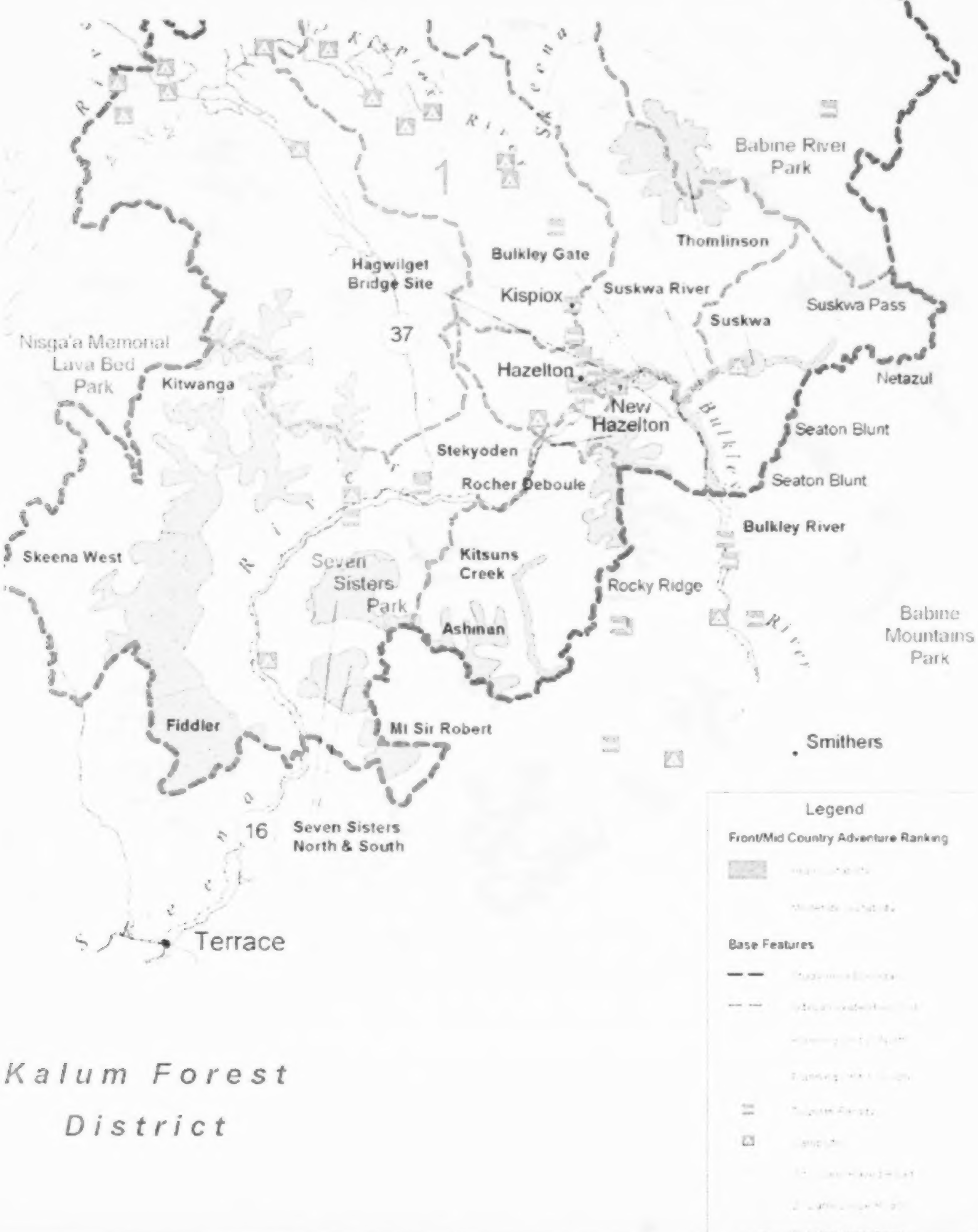
Description of Polygon	Description of Polygon
Seven Sisters	Kitsuns (see rivers)
Rocher Deboule	Hagwilget Bridge site (point)
Mt. Thomlinson	Stekyoden (point)
Suskwa River	Bulkley Gate (point)
Bulkley River	Suskwa (near forestry bridge)

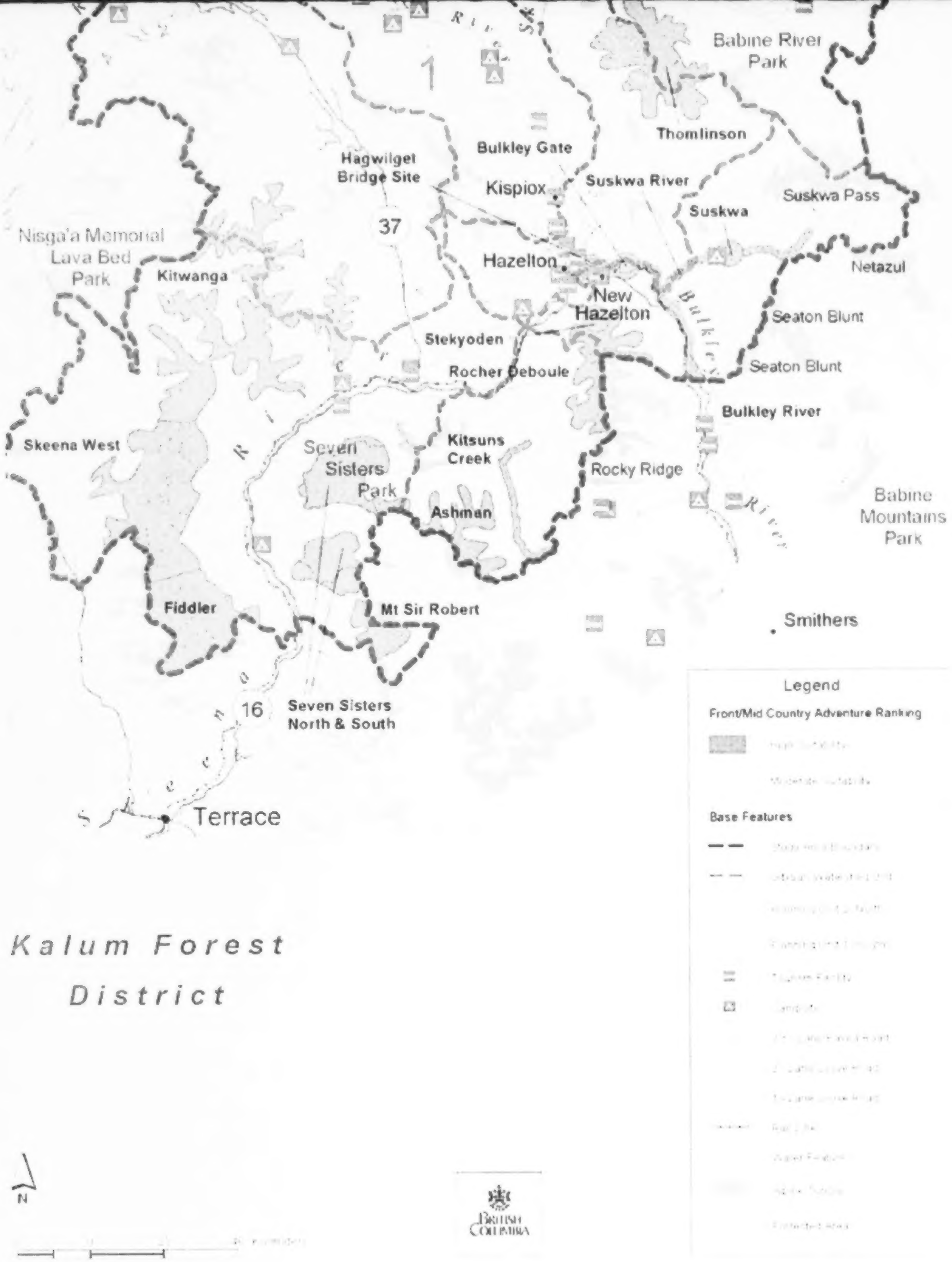
7.4.6 Front and Mid Country Adventure Map

On the following page is the tourism suitability map for the Front and Mid Country Adventure product (Exhibit 22).

Kispiox Tourism Opportunity Study

Front and Mid Country Adventure Suitability


Kispiox River
Skeena
1
Babine River Park
Thomlinson
Bulkley Gate
Hagwilget Bridge Site
Kispiox
Suskwa River
Suskwa
Suskwa Pass
37
Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park
Kitwanga
Hazelton
New Hazelton
Netazul
Bulkley
Seaton Blunt
Seaton Blunt
Stekyoden
Rocher Deboule
Bulkley River
Skeena West
Seven Sisters Park
Kitsuns Creek
Rocky Ridge
Ashman
Babine Mountains Park
Fiddler
Mt Sir Robert
Smithers
16
Seven Sisters North & South
Terrace
Kalum Forest District
Legend
Front/Mid Country Adventure Ranking
Base Features
1 - Lane Loose Road


Babine River Park
1
Thomlinson
Bulkley Gate
Hagwilget Bridge Site
Kispiox
Suskwa River
Suskwa Pass
Suskwa
37
Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park
Kitwanga
Hazelton
New Hazelton
Netazul
Seaton Blunt
Seaton Blunt
Stekyoden
Rocher Deboule
Bulkley
Bulkley River
Skeena West
Seven Sisters Park
Kitsuns Creek
Rocky Ridge
Ashman
River
Babine Mountains Park
Fiddler
Mt Sir Robert
Smithers
16
Seven Sisters North & South
Skeena
Terrace
Kalum Forest District
N
Legend
Front/Mid Country Adventure Ranking
High Suitability
Moderate Suitability
Base Features
Tourism Facility
Campsite
Rail Line
Water Feature
Protected Area
British Columbia

7.5 Cultural Heritage Interpretation

7.5.1 Description

The viewing of heritage, culture, wildlife and nature in general are principal components of ecotourism (low impact, non-consumptive tourism). As growth of the ecotourism industry continues, the region can benefit through increased marketing of their significant assets and developing further infrastructure that meets the demand for a range of products, from rustic to full-service.

Heritage and cultural interpretation is focused on the First Nations that first settled the land as well as the successive groups of immigrants. It is closely linked to the natural environment.

> *Cultural tourism is about exploration of difference and exploration of heritage. For First Nations, culture and ecology are inseparable so the term cultural ecotourism may be more appropriate. We know that the draw of cultural ecotourism is bound up in experiencing the "real thing" - that reading about something, or visiting static displays, is not the same as discovering something firsthand.*
>
> *Part of the "real thing" experience is being interested in more than just scenery. It means providing visitors with opportunities to learn about the history and events over time that shaped the land, and the people who live on the land.*
>
> Excerpts from Doug Donaldson, Connections Magazine Website

Nature observation and interpretation is a general activity that focuses on the natural history of an area from the palaeontology to the current. The forces of ice, snow, wind and rain on the landscape can attract high levels of interest.

Wildlife observation relates to the opportunity to view wildlife. This requires a level of reliability that ensures that the wildlife will be in a certain location. Wildlife observation includes the viewing of a variety of animals, from mammals, birds, and fish to reptiles. What contributes to the attraction of wildlife observation is: the uniqueness and rarity of the animal to be observed, exceptional numbers, romantic notions that build on an animals esteem, and the relationship of an animal to cultural and heritage interpretation.

The culture, heritage and nature observation and interpretation product is significant as an associative product to many activities. Road tours, rafting, canoeing, air tours, hiking, and mountaineering all benefit by including this product into their program. Destination lodges can only benefit by diversifying the interests of their customers.

7.5.2 Regional Overview

Strengths	Quality and variety of cultural, historical, and natural features. Although inland, the traditional art forms are similar to the coast. Relationship of natural features to traditional stories. Very high marketability. Existing capacity for further cultural interpretation. Low impact, non-consumptive activity.
Weaknesses	Although each culture is unique there is a repeatability of similar products along the BC coast. Shortage of artifacts and other visible evidence of culture and heritage. Minimal level of support facilities and services for cultural and historical interpretation. Unreliability of wildlife sightings. Lack of packaging into outdoor products.
Concerns	Role of the First Nations to tell their own story may be compromised by outside operators. Habituation of animals (bears) to human presence and activity.

7.5.3 Resource Assessment

7.5.3.1 HISTORICAL STRUCTURES / LOCATIONS

Evidence of ancient artifacts are diminished by the decomposing effects on weather and vegetative growth on the material used, chiefly wood. For the Gitxsan and Gitanyow, the reemergence of traditional art and cultural introspection and subsequent exposition has resulted in new but significant cultural artifacts.

SOUTH

Totem poles at Gitwangak (12 poles, some more than a century old), Gitsegukla (visible from the highway), Anspayaxw (Kispiox Village where there are 15 poles) and Gitanyow (some of the finest examples in the traditional territiory)..

Fort Kitwanga National Historic Site is a 13 meter manmade hill that marks the site of the fortress or *ta'awdzep*, an ancient crossroads of trade and warfare. This marks the site of the epic adventures of Nekt, a warrior who defended Gitxsan territories. Parks Canada has interpretive panels and the totem poles in Gitwangak likewise tell the story.

St. Pauls Anglican Church in Gitwangak was built in 1893 with stained glass windows from England.

Mission Flats is west of Hazelton High road (Hwy 62) and is the site where thousands of traders from a half dozen nations would gather. They exchanged eulachons grease, copper, herring eggs, furs and other items including ideas as well as stories of the white men as they began to make their way across. Today, there is no presence of past activity.

Hagwilget Bridge site is a 75 meter steel suspension bridge built in 1931, at the time the longest suspension bridge in the world and still a defining, distinctive feature in the area.. Built on the site of traditional Gitxsan suspension bridges. Trail network to plateau above river where smokehouses once stood. Exceptional views of Stekyoden..

***VILLAGES*:**

The ***'Ksan Historic Village*** is a reproduction of what the traditional Gitxsan village was like. Includes totems, replica longhouses, museum, giftshop, carving school, performing arts and park-like setting at confluence of Bulkley and Skeena Rivers. Established in early 1970s on approximate site of original village of Gitanmaax.

SOUTH

Gitsegukla village is where the 1872 Skeena River rebellion began. It was a response to the destruction of communal houses, ancient poles, and canoes after prospectors left a campfire burning. An agreement for compensation for what "stood for generations" was undertaken with the B.C. government to reopen the Skeena trade artery. New Christian faiths divided the community into Andimaul and Carnaby. In 1926, New Gitsegukla was established and eventually Carnaby and Andimaul were deserted.

Wet'suwet'en people living on Gitxsan traditional territory primarily populate ***Hagwilget village***. Approximately 300 years ago a landslide in the Bulkley River canyon blocked fish migration upstream leading to the possibility of widespread starvation for the upstream Wet'suwet'en people who fished at the Moricetown canyon. An agreement with the Gitxsan allowed them to establishment a settlement at Hagwilget to fish the Bulkley River below the landslide in the Hagwilget canyon. Totem pole, trail to the canyon, spectacular views of Stekyoden.

Anspayaxw (Kispiox Village) has totems, a fish hatchery and an information center. The name Anspayaxw means "the hiding place" and Kispiox is a name chosen by the Department of Indian Affairs meaning "loud talkers". Beautiful setting at the confluence of the Kispiox and Skeena Rivers.

Sigit'ox (Glen Vowell) has a unique history. The Salvation Army church provides the backdrop for a dramatic changes born of religious war. Shifts in faith beginning with the traditional to the Catholic missionaries to the Methodists (who in 1890 established themselves and tore up much of the ancient social fabric) turned into confrontation when villagers who had been away returned as soldiers of the Salvation Army and a small war ensued. Eventually the Salvation Army families made a home a Sik'e-dahk and the traditional Kispiox site and Glenn Vowell housed the other community.

Historic Old Town (Hazelton) is the original European settlement on the Skeena River and was once the commercial centre for the entire northwest and north-central interior of the province. Became the upriver terminus of a steam-powered, sternwheeler fleet based on the coast that supplied miners and settlers through the Kispiox, Bulkley and Omineca areas. Replica sternwheeler, historic walking tours, heritage buildings, museum and interpretive waterfront park are current features. On the Skeena River, just upstream from where it is joined by the Bulkley River.

ANCIENT VILLAGE SITES:

Include ***Old Kuldo Village*** (Galdo'o) site (Originally occupied by Gitxsan seeking a safe location from the raids of the Tsetsaut, this site was occupied until 1924. A halfway cabin for men working the Yukon Telegraph Trail is also visible. Visible depressions of storage huts (cache pits) and emergency shelters in case of attack as well as a canal.

Gitangasx is one of the one of the original Gitxsan village sites and predated Temlaxam according to Gitxsan oral history. Site was eventually abandoned due to repeated attacks from Tsetsaut further north. All Gitxsan Lax Gibuu (Wolf clan) Houses of Kisgegas and Kuldo trace their origins to Gitangasx. The clearing is still present at the site along bank of the Skeena near the confluence with the Slamgeesh River – cache pits can still be seen.

Sites along the Babine River include ***Gisgegas village*** which has a rich cultural history, and petroglyphs ("people of the white gull" once lived on the north bank of the Babine River). Had a resident population until the early 1950s and is still used seasonally, especially for traditional fishing sites in the Babine River canyon below the village site.

NORTH

Gitangasx is a site with opportunities for cultural interpretation. One of the original Gitxsan villages along with Temleham.

Damdochax Lake, Slamgeesh River and Groundhog Mountain. Site of the ancient village of **Gitwinhlt'uutsxwhl'aks** located at Blackwater Lake – all the Lax Ganeda (Frog clan). Houses of Kisgegas trace their origins here.

Birdflat Creek confluence with the Sustut River is the site of numerous cache pits indicates an ancient meeting site of the Gitxsan

Bear Lake is an important Gitxsan site.

7.5.3.2 GITXSAN AND GITANYAW TRADITIONAL USE AREAS

A traditional use area is defined as a geographically defined location that has been customarily used by one or more contemporary groups of aboriginal people for some type of culturally significant activity. These sites may not reveal physical evidence of use. Traditional use sites are usually documented through oral, historical, and archival sources. Examples of Traditional Use Sites may include: resource gathering areas, locations of culturally significant events, ritual bathing pools, etc.

The Gitxsan and Gitanyaw territories are extensively forested. Much of the old growth forest floor is moss-covered, providing fertile growing areas for mushrooms. Many of these are edible and one type in particular – the pine mushroom – is picked for export to Japan. Open areas in the forested land provide prime growing locations for wild berries. The landscape also produces many types of medicinal plants that are harvested by the Gitxsan.

Small mammals, such as pine marten, are abundant and are trapped for their fur. Deer, moose and mountain goat are often used as a source of food. The land is also home to healthy populations of black and grizzly bears.

In the past, Gitxsan actively burned areas to enhance and manage both wild berry and game habitat.

SOUTH

The west side of the ***Skeena River, Seven Sisters*** and ***Fiddler Creek*** contain many traditional use areas including the Gitxsan smoke houses (wilpsahon) by the Skeena River. Although the structures are contemporary, the locations are ancient.

Traditional fishing activities along the ***Kispiox and Babine Rivers***.

Gunanoot Lake

Suskwa River valley hunting and berry picking sites.

NORTH

Sicintine and Skeena River confluence. Bear Lake, Birdflat Creek, Sustut Rive, Damdochax (Blackwater) and Slamgeesh Lakes are significant seasonal sites.

7.5.3.3 HISTORICAL TRAILS

Please note: → heritage trails are further identified and discussed in the *Trail Product analysis*.

Trade and Grease Trails

The Gitxsan and Gitanyow traded with the adjoining First Nations for a variety of goods. Trails that originated from the Nass and Kitimat watersheds were extensively used for the trade in oil rendered from eulachons, or candlefish. The oil, or grease, would be transported in wooden bent-box containers packed over the trails. These trails were later known as "grease trails". In later years, non-aboriginal trading utilized the trails established by the First Nations, as did the influx of miners into the region.

Telegraph Trails

The Collins Overland Telegraph trail was constructed utilizing established First Nations trails and blazing new paths (started in 1866 in an attempt to link North America to Europe via the Berring Strait). The trail ended near north of Kispiox village (Anspayaxw). Twenty years later the Yukon Telegraph Trail continued northward, a response by the Canadian government to establish firm dominion over the Yukon in the face of a gold rush that drew large numbers of Americans. Associated with the Yukon Telegraph trails are cabins and halfway cabins. The main cabins are situated about 51 kilometers apart and housed linemen year round.

SOUTH
Kuldo Creek – Kispiox River is another east-west grease trail route. There are a lot of Culturally Modified trees at the Kuldo Creek end plus a section of the Yukon Telegraph Trail. Soil conditions are poor for trail routing.
Hazelton – Babine Trail is a historic grease trail, trade route and Omineca gold rush route into the interior. The trail is still in pretty good shape. Lots of history associated with Cataline (Jean Caux) and his 100-horse pack trains leaving town along this route in the late 1800s.
Atnas, (same as Kisgegas/Kuldo), Sperry, Rosenthal valleys & Goathead Pass.

NORTH
Damdochax Lake, Slamgeesh River and Groundhog Mountain is a traditionally important north-south corridor connecting the *Skeena and Nass River watersheds.*
Kluatantan River – Gitxsan from this territory migrate seasonally south to the village of Kisgegas to fish.
Yukon Telegraph Trail – many line cabins and other artifacts are still visible along route
Vile Creek, Canyon Lake, Canyon Creek is a traditional east-west connector between the Nass and Skeena watersheds (Grease Trail). Lots of foot traffic here right up until the early part of the century. Guide/outfitter cabin at Canyon Lake.
Bear Lake to Gisgegas

7.5.3.4 NATURE

Roche Deboule and the Seven Sisters are outstanding scenic features. Sheer granite peaks rise above the forested slopes. Small glaciers and icefields are interspersed throughout the range.

The area around Swan Lake shows the clear effects of glacial ice moving southeasterly across the landscape. Linear lakes and ridges are also evident in the Shelagyote valley and around Damsumlo Lake.

Wildlife

- Wildlife viewing with the exception of salmon, is primarily incidental with no known areas where there is a guarantee of being able to view wildlife.
- Salmon can be viewed along the Skeena and Bulkley confluence, and near the Hagwilget bridge site
- In the spring, migrating Sandhill Cranes can be seen through the Bulkley Valley and north of Hazelton .
- Bears sightings are incidental but are common, particularly along the Kuldo, the Babine and the upper Kispiox (grizzly sightings at the latter two areas are common).
- On the east side of the Sicintine Ranges, the Jake Creek valley is known for concentrations of wildlife, particularly bear and moose.
- The Damdochax-Slamgeesh valley is know for concentrations of wildlife, particularly grizzly bears, wolves and eagles which are able to feed for extended periods because salmon runs on these two rivers occur in sequence rather than concurrently. High populations of moose and mountain goats are found in the area. Damdochax Lake is also known for concentrations of waterfowl during migration seasons.
- Mountain goat viewing opportunities are good in the Rocher Deboule, Seven Sisters and Atna Ranges.

7.5.3.5 RESOURCE SUMMARY

South

Heritage: The physical evidence of First Nations heritage and culture is focused on the communities where a renaissance of traditional art is evident. The use of wood and the effect of the elements has obscured many of the original artifacts. Interpretive opportunities are available. Signs directing the attention to tourists in the region are uncommon.

Nature: There are areas where the occurrences of wildlife are high but the reliability of observation is not assured. The exceptions are the Sandhill cranes and salmon. The geographical features are not unique. Herbal plants and pine mushrooms can be found in many areas and tours can be associated with their proper gathering, ecosystem relationship and their significance to the traditional use and local economies.

North

Heritage: Physical evidence of traditional use and occupation is largely obscured.

Nature Observation: There are areas where the occurrence of wildlife are high but the reliability of observation is not assured with the exception of the salmon. The geographical features are not unique.

Associated products include trail products, freshwater non-motorized and motorized activities, air tours, road tours. The significance of these associated products to the cultural heritage is and the nature observation product is high.

7.5.4 Market and Socio-economic Assessment

7.5.4.1 MARKETS

Nature observers are typically involved in watching, interpreting or photographing flora, geological or other natural resource features. Travellers with a cultural/historical interest are attracted to aboriginal culture as well as colonial and industrial heritage features. Each of these market segments vary in their demographic characteristics. While some data is available on the wildlife viewing and nature observer markets, little is known about cultural/historical travellers.

Nature observers and wildlife viewers tend to be baby boomers in the 35-55 years bracket, evenly distributed between women and men. However, nature observers are more likely to travel solo or be on business than other adventure travellers. Wildlife viewers travel extensively as couples or families.

Among tourism operators, the Canadian market represents approximately half of both the nature observation and wildlife viewing participants. The US is a very important market for these activities as well. In fact, nature observation (51%) and whale watching (30%) are among the activities with the highest percentage of American visitors. The German market is also important to the "Other Wildlife Viewing" segment, primarily through their interest in bear viewing.

According to a 1994 study[42], the **aboriginal cultural tourist** is between 25 and 55 years of age, relatively affluent and has higher levels of education. In general, the further a visitor came from, the more likely they were to visit First Nations attractions, as shown by the high percentage of visitors from Europe, long-haul US and Eastern Canada. Europeans, particularly Germans, and Japanese tourists have shown a high degree of interest in Canada's First Nations people.

The future demand for all aspects of this product will continue to grow and evolve as increased infrastructure, interpretation and operator expertise bring new and interesting sub-products to market. Demographic trends, including increasing education levels among travellers and the demand for more learning and participative experiences, will favour communities that have made the investment in facility and product development and training.

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[42] Aboriginal Culture Tourism: The Market, Bernard Campbell, 1994.

BC has very good marketability and international renown for wildlife viewing, nature observation and native cultural viewing. But competition within the province is quite extensive. Some of the major wildlife viewing sub-products with a high level of appeal (e.g. salmon, grizzly bears, eagles) are present in the area but not always in high enough numbers. The competition for the cultural/historical participant is also growing, but 'Ksan is usually viewed as one of the earliest and more successful attempts at First Nations interpretation and therefore has good market visibility that could be further leveraged. However, many native communities around the province and indeed North America have steadily developed their tourism capabilities. In Alberta, especially, the investment in interpretation infrastructure both in the national parks and other facilities (Tyrell Museum, Frank Slide Interpretive Centre, Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump) has drawn high market volumes.

7.5.4.2 ISSUES/CONFLICTS

There is a potential conflict between increasing accessibility to native culture and maintaining authenticity of the product and respecting First Nation's needs for appropriate privacy. Locally-based solutions and productive partnerships between First Nations and the tourism industry is essential.

Some areas have developed into ecological "hotspots" where friction between various user groups and environmental concerns are not uncommon. The Babine River corridor is an example. This increased profile can have both positive and negative implications.

7.5.4.3 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Unless it was associated with lodge or resort development, it is unlikely that tenure would be required for this product, and only then if the operator developed his own infrastructure and services. It is likely that any First Nations interpretation would require cooperation with and possibly permission from the First Nations group involved. A Licence of Occupation from BCAL for trail or campsite development or park use permit for guiding within park boundaries may be required.

Infrastructure is a very important consideration, both for wildlife viewing or heritage interpretation. For viewing, the requirements will vary depending on the wildlife/natural history viewing activity and the number of visitors. With wildlife viewing, nature observation or heritage interpretation, trails, viewing platforms and interpretive signage/displays will improve the visitor experience and create opportunities for further product development.

The incorporation of this product into other outdoor products will depend on the availability of interpretative facilities, services and programming (e.g. festivals). This especially true of any First Nations interpretation. Interpretive opportunities are important to offset the minimal physical evidence of artefacts and structures. Developing effective partnerships between First Nations and other tourism operators can leverage resources to the benefit of everyone in the region. This cannot be done inexpensively – there will be significant requirements for capital investments and development of human resources. On the positive side, further development, especially if it is tied to new facilities, has the potential to generate above-average job and income benefits.

New facilities and infrastructure would benefit tourism development in the Kispiox, but it should not come at the expense of existing facilities. For example, infrastructure in Hazelton, 'Ksan and Hagwilget Bridge should be a focus of efforts to maintain those tourism features that cater to existing tourism markets. Maintenance of these existing facilities should have a high priority

There will be issues about cultural sensitivities, sacred sites and sustainability that have to be addressed before heritage tourism can proceed. Communities should develop a clearly articulated and applied heritage resource policy. Without it, heritage development will be a piecemeal process and may lead to unintended consequences for tourism and for the communities involved.

In addition there will be a need for a coordinated effort amongst tourism operators and the First Nations people to ensure that aboriginal tourism is developed in such a way as to effectively promote their culture in an interesting, yet sensitive, manner. Tourism BC has signed an accord with the Aboriginal Tourism Association of BC to help develop and promote aboriginal tourism in the province. The association is also developing an accreditation program to ensure quality standards amongst aboriginal tourism businesses.

7.5.4.4 OVERALL POTENTIAL

The overall potential for the development of this product in the Kispiox is excellent, primarily in the areas of First Nations interpretation. 'Ksan has given the area some destination recognition. Higher levels of interpretation and alternate programming will have to be undertaken to expand the appeal to already busy touring travellers. Survey data indicates that educational trips are a growing attractant for this group of travellers.[43]

The study area offers some unique opportunities in general nature tours, First Nations interpretation, and to a lesser extent, wildlife viewing. First Nations interpretation has potential to offer a complementary experience to other, primary products. Also of interest to travel markets are the viewing opportunities related to other natural resources in the study area, including glaciers, alpine areas and parks/protected areas.

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[43] Ecotourism – Nature/Adventure/Culture: Alberta and British Columbia Market Demand Assessment Travel Trade Survey Results. HLA Consultants and The ARA Consulting Group. 1995

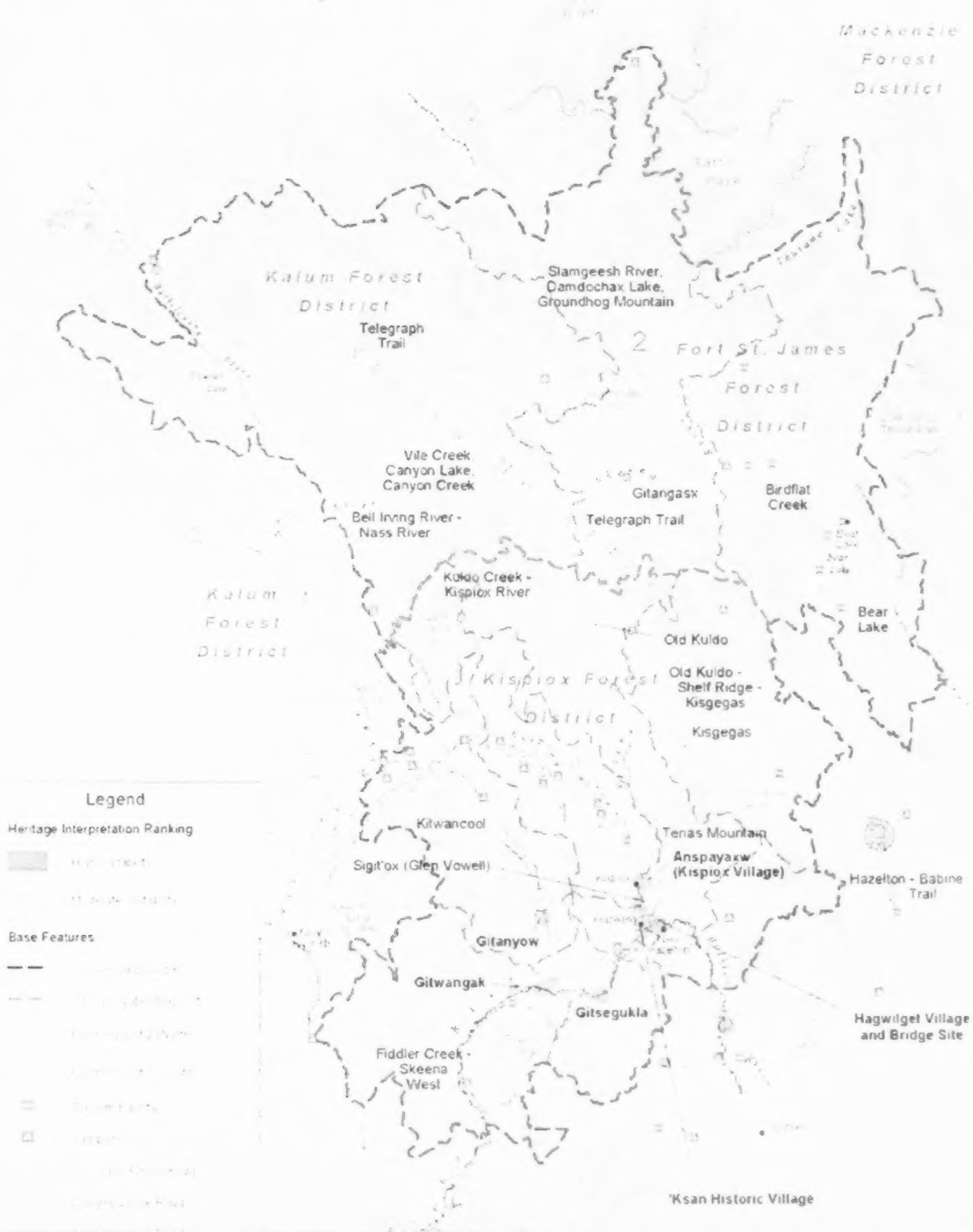
MARKET & SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA			
UNITS:		**South Unit**	**North Unit**
Markets	Demand	**High**: very high interest and participation levels amongst all geographic markets.	
	Competition	**High**: major focus of most tourism regions, increasing interpretive investments being in BC and Alberta.	
	Overall potential	**High**: excellent diversity of close-in features & aboriginal culture.	**Medium**: lack of infrastructure and facilities will be a challenge.
Impact/ Conflict	Use	**Medium**: minor concerns with high use resources such as the major rivers, and potential conflicts with industrial road traffic.	
	Community / Social	**Medium**: policies and protocols for access to and use of sensitive First Nat ions sites should be undertaken. Communities should agree on what levels and types of tourism development they would like.	
Business Develop-ment Needs	Crown tenure	**Medium**: required for repeated commercial usage or permanent structures. First Nations can utilize IR lands.	
	Infrastructure	**High**: investments in public and private infrastructure.	
	Capital	**Medium-High**: can range from simple viewing platforms or trail upgrades to capital-intensive interpretive centres.	
Level of community support		**High**: excellent match with community and First Nations' development needs.	
Employment opportunities		**Medium-High**: project development could create a variety of interpreter, guide, hospitality and other service jobs.	
Opportunities		• Link with fishing, river and trail based products, including a Prince Rupert to Hazelton boat tour. • Multi-activity tours combined key interpretive features (e.g. Hagwilget Bridge, Old Hazelton) • Aboriginal Cultural Stewardship Program (for training interpreters) • Joint ventures and partnerships between First Nations and tourism operators • IR site and interpretive centre development (Gitwangak, Gitsegucla, Gitanmaax, Hagwilget) • Accreditation from ATABC	• IR/cultural site development (Gitangasx, Gisgegas, Gitwinhlt'uutsxwhl'aks, Fort Connelly) • Interpretation of Yukon Telegraph Trail. • Linkages to river activities, including fishing. • Aboriginal Cultural Stewardship Program (for training interpreters) • Linkages with lodge/resorts and wildlife viewing. •

7.5.5 Cultural Heritage Interpretation Map

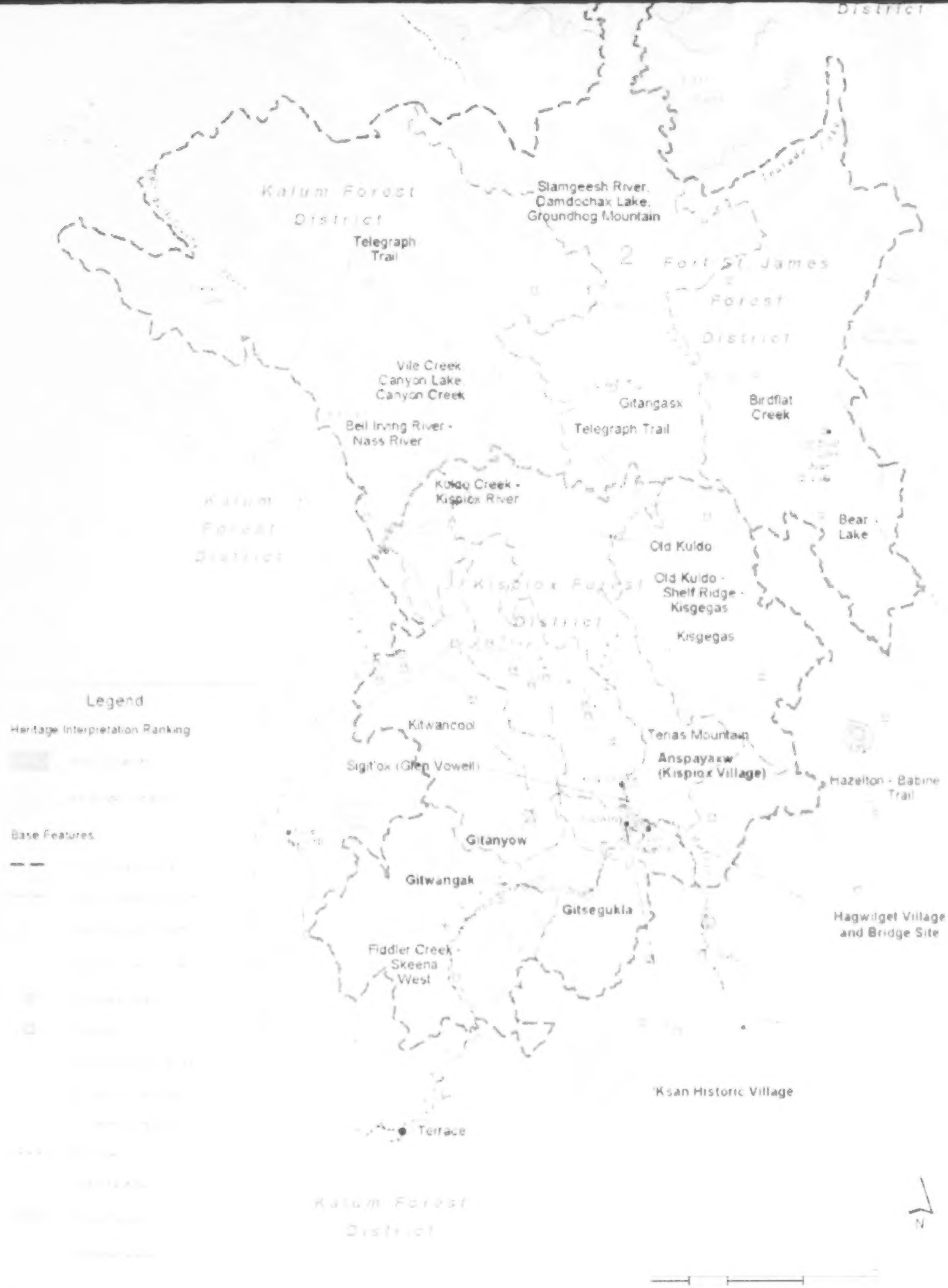
On the following page is the tourism suitability map for the Cultural Heritage Interpretation product (Exhibit 23).

Kispiox Tourism Opportunity Study

Cultural Heritage Interpretation Suitability



Mackenzie Forest District
Kalum Forest District
Slamgeesh River, Damdochax Lake, Groundhog Mountain
Telegraph Trail
2
Fort St. James Forest District
Vile Creek Canyon Lake, Canyon Creek
Gitangasx
Birdflat Creek
Bell Irving River - Nass River
Telegraph Trail
Kuldo Creek - Kispiox River
Kalum Forest District
Bear Lake
Old Kuldo
Kispiox Forest District
Old Kuldo - Shelf Ridge - Kisgegas
Kisgegas
Legend
Heritage Interpretation Ranking
Base Features
Kitwancool
Tenas Mountain
Sigit'ox (Glen Vowell)
Anspayaxw (Kispiox Village)
Hazelton - Babine Trail
Gitanyow
Gitwangak
Gitsegukla
Hagwilget Village and Bridge Site
Fiddler Creek - Skeena West
'Ksan Historic Village
Terrace


District
Kalum Forest District
Telegraph Trail
Slamgeesh River, Camdochax Lake, Groundhog Mountain
2
Fort St. James Forest District
Vile Creek, Canyon Lake, Canyon Creek
Gitangasx
Birdflat Creek
Bell Irving River - Nass River
Telegraph Trail
Kuldo Creek - Kispiox River
Kalum Forest District
Bear Lake
Old Kuldo
Old Kuldo - Shelf Ridge - Kisgegas
Kispiox Forest District
Kisgegas
Legend
Heritage Interpretation Ranking
Base Features
Kitwancool
Tenas Mountain
Anspayaxw (Kispiox Village)
Sigit'ox (Glen Vowell)
Hazelton - Babine Trail
Gitanyow
Gitwangak
Gitsegukla
Hagwilget Village and Bridge Site
Fiddler Creek - Skeena West
'Ksan Historic Village
Terrace
Kalum Forest District
N

7.6 Nordic (Cross-Country) Skiing / Ski Touring

7.6.1 Description

There are three general types of nordic skiing. **Cross-country skiing** is undertaken on trails that are groomed for skating (wide compressed corridor) or classic skiing (parallel tracks for skis). All three cross-country areas in the Bulkley valley have trails developed for both skating & classic skiing on the same trails. **Light-touring** usually involves creating one's own tracks using a medium width ski on excursions of less than one day. **Backcountry ski touring** involves multi-day trips/excursions of varying lengths to backcountry areas, frequently with varying terrain, usually in alpine areas. Both light touring and backcountry ski touring can involve telemark skiing – free-heeled downhill skiing. For backcountry skiing, a premium is placed on pristine wilderness and lack of motorized vehicles. Wildlife sightings and evidence on the snow enhances the product.

Downhill skiing utilizes lifts, helicopters and snowcats to access the elevations required to ski downhill unencumbered.

7.6.2 Regional Overview

Strengths	Quick access to open alpine. Quality scenic features. Relatively long season (5-6 months). Dry snow conditions. Loop trail network near towns. Some infrastructure to support activity.
Weaknesses	Adjoining regions (Bulkley) provides very high opportunities. Variable winter road conditions to many backcountry trailheads. Medium to high avalanche hazards.
Concerns	Shortage of public sector funding to develop and maintain trails. Potential competition/conflicts in areas accessible to snowmobilers.

7.6.3 Resource Assessment

There are a number of locations within the Kispiox Study Area that are well suited for skiing. The variety of terrain including open sub-alpine and alpine ridges and bowls, glaciers, icefields, meadows, the availability of suitable trails and old mining roads, establishes the area as an attractive region for the nordic skiing / ski tour product. Optimal snowfall and the ready access from communities enhance the product viability in the Northwest region.

7.6.3.1 CROSS COUNTRY SKIING

Cross-country skiing requires the infrastructure and maintained grooming. It is generally associated with clubs and communities.

NAME	GENERAL DESCRIPTION
SOUTH UNIT	
Ross Lake Ski Trail & Hospital Lake	**General Description:** Ski trail encircles Ross Lake and is approximately 3.6 km long. Access to Hospital Lake and associated trails is direct from Old Town and Two Mile. **Other existing winter activities**: snowshoeing **Comments and Issues:** The trails offer a novice level of skiing.
Lower Kispiox Valley	**General Description:** Community ski area north of Kispiox Village using old roads and crossing private lands **Comments**: Used by local residents, property ownership could be a problem in the future

7.6.3.2 SKI TOURING

Light touring (Lt) utilizes locations that can be readily accessed from the population centers and are moderately difficult or technical. Winter road conditions, access road conditions (wide and plowed), industrial traffic, and the presence of snowmobiles are potential limitations.

Backcountry Ski Touring (Bt) is generally a multi-day excursion and requires an advanced skill level, knowledge of winter camping and excellent physical stamina to meet the challenges of the backcountry in winter. Destination lodges or huts allow skiers to enjoy the comforts of an accommodation. The presence of helicopters may provide access to ski touring opportunities in the ranges surrounding the staging areas.

	Lt, Bt	SOUTH UNIT	Opportunities
Ashman Ridge	Bt	**General Description:** Dramatic landscape with jagged peaks, steep slopes, alpine, subalpine, cirque basins, extensive snow and ice. Rolling terrain with open alpine. Good telemarking through trees, a non-motorized area. **Other existing winter activities:** Some snowmobiling **Comments and Issues:** This range is designated as non-motorized. Road access is reached through the Bulkley Study Area.	H
Atna	Bt	**General Description:** Remote dramatic landscape with extensive ridges with rolling alpine and sub-alpine, jagged peaks, steep slopes. Extensive glacier. **Other existing winter activities:** Some snowmobiling **Comments and Issues:** The construction of the Tommy Jack mainline will allow both skiers and snowmobiles access to this remote area.	H
Kispiox	Lt	**General Description:** includes Moonlit mountain. The area offers an extensive alpine and sub-alpine ridge system gentle peaks. There are a few entry points. **Other existing winter activities:** Snowmobiling in some areas **Comments and Issues: Areas experiencing** snowmobile use have limited opportunities for skiers desiring a quiet relatively pristine conditions.	H

	Lt, Bt	SOUTH UNIT	Opportunities
Skeena West / Lorne	Bt	**General Description:** Alpine plateau complex near the headwaters of Insect Creek, west of the Skeena. **Other existing activities:** Some snowmobiling near south end **Comments and Issues:** Currently accessible only by air but may become accessible from the Cedar River forest road out of Terrace as forest development occurs. The nature of this area would make it attractive to both snowmobilers and skiers.	H
Mount Sir Robert Range	Bt	**General Description**: Jagged peaks with sharp ridges and sections of rolling subalpine. Glacier. **Other existing winter activities:** none **Comments and Issues:** Sections of rolling alpine, glaciers and sub-alpine bowls makes this area suitable for ski touring. The distance from road accessible communities makes this a backcountry air access product. Access by road would be via Smithers and the McDonnel Lake Road	H
Netazul	Bt	**General Description**: Short range with glacier. Sharp ridges with some rolling alpine with wide expanses of alpine meadow. **Other existing winter activities:** none **Comments and Issues:** Limited remote opportunities. High mountain goat population.	L
Nine Mile	Lt	**General Description:** Easily accessed mountain. **Other existing winter activities:** Snowmobiling **Comments and Issues:** Snowmobile use limits opportunities for skiers desiring quiet relatively pristine conditions. Some opportunities exist for tree skiing on the south side of the ridge, areas not usually used by snowmobilers.	M
Rocher Deboule Range	Bt	**General Description:** Dramatic landscape with jagged peaks, steep slopes, alpine, subalpine, small glacier, many cirque basins, several with small lakes. *Boulder Creek and Juniper road* provide access to the alpine of the Rocher Deboule Range. **Other existing winter activities:** Snowmobiling **Comments and Issues:** Steep difficult terrain with a small section at the end of Juniper Creek road suitable for ski mountaineering.. LRMP rates the range as important for goat populations.	L
Thoen-French	Bt	**General Description**: This section has extensive rounded ridges with rolling sub-alpine and alpine. **Other existing winter activities: Some snowmobiling** **Comments and Issues:** The distance from road accessible communities makes this a backcountry product.. Snowmobilers from Hazelton are using portions of this area which are accessible from the Suskwa Valley.	H
Seaton	Lt	**General Description:** Rounded ridges with extensive rolling sub-alpine and alpine also many rugged cirque talus basins, sharp ridges and gendarmes. Trails with skiing opportunities. *Seaton Basin and Mt. Seaton*- Old mining trail access. Moderate to difficult. **Other existing winter activities:** Snowmobiling **Comments and Issues:** Snowmobile use limits opportunities for skiers desiring quiet relatively pristine conditions.	H

	Lt, Bt	SOUTH UNIT	Opportunities
Sicintine, Driftwood & Connelly Ranges	Bt	**General Description:** Heritage trails and Guide Outfitter trails **Other existing winter activities:** Suitable for ski mountaineering and potential for heli-sking on the east side.of the Sicintine. Snowmobiling **Comments and Issues:** Remote, difficult to access, primitive area. Avalanche considerations in the valleys.	M
		NORTH UNIT	
Red Flats **Bell 2**	Bt	**General Description:** Remote dramatic landscape with extensive ridges with rolling alpine and sub-alpine, bowls and cirques. Ideal snow conditions. **Other existing winter activities:** Heli-sking **Comments and Issues:** Accessible via Highway 37, this area is extensively used for tenured heli-skiing. The area is of high regional significance for snow conditions and suitable skiing terrain..	H

7.6.3.3 Downhill Skiing

The nearest downhill skiing opportunities are at Hudson Bay Mountain near Smithers with 34 runs and a vertical of 1750 feet provide high opportunities and Mt. Shames close to Terrace.

7.6.3.4 Heliskiing & Snowcat Skiing

The success of this product is dependent on areas with higher snowfall far from any road access. The skiable vertical relief in the area is not as great or numerous as in established operations in other parts of BC. The exception is the heli-skiing opportunities in Bell 2, where the snow conditions, the suitable terrain and remoteness make this an internationally recognized area for unspoiled skiing.

There is a potential for local heli skiing opportunities associated with the Kitsegukla, Rocher Deboule, Thoen, Seaton and Mt. Thomlinson Ranges. Snow conditions, turnaround times, conflicts with other users and wildlife concerns must be addressed.

Associated products include the Hut System, heli-access, other winter activities (dog sledding, snowshoeing, etc.) are significant. Dog sledding presently exists with an operator catering to regional tourism and school groups. A hut system in any of the Atna, Kitwanga, Kispiox, Ashman, Thoen and French Ranges would increase the interest in the area.

7.6.4 Market and Socio-economic Assessment

7.6.4.1 Markets

In Canada, skiing is more likely to be undertaken by women (54%) than men. The fact that 38% of skiers are travelling in a family group also differentiates it from other activities. The vast majority of participants in BC are residents. Statistics from the US indicate that: 52% of skiers are women, 45% of skiers are age 35-54, 41% of skiers are college educated, and 49% of skiers have household incomes in excess of $50,000(USD). Participation has been increasing amongst senior citizens as the activity has been promoted as an excellent way to enjoy the outdoors and maintain a good level of fitness.

The most popular reasons given for why people ski include: 1) the whole family can participate together, 2) practical fun way to enjoy the outdoors during the winter, 3) social contact with other skiers on the trail and at ski area lodges, 4) ideal cross training sport for running and biking, and 5) weight loss - burns more calories per hour than any other sport.

The market for cross-country skiing is small but growing strongly. It has one of the lowest participation rates among North Americans of all products studied in this report, but future projections for participation are encouraging. Of the 19 activities studied in a recent US report, cross-country skiing was projected to have the third highest growth rate in participation, following only sailing and downhill skiing.[44] As skiing technology improves (e.g. touring skis are now more shapely, giving beginners increased performance with less effort for activities like telemarking) and as lift-service options expand, ski touring will become even more accessible to a broader market.

The number of Europeans and other overseas visitors who participate in this sport in Canada is negligible. The majority of cross-country skiers also participate in other outdoor sports such as hiking, camping and fishing; 25 percent are also alpine skiers.[45]

There are several areas in BC and Alberta with quality ski terrain, whether for touring or conventional cross-country. In neighbouring regions such as Alberta, there are dozens of huts within a day's ski from main highways that are popular as multi-day and weekend destinations. The quality of ski touring in the Canadian Rockies is recognized worldwide and this has prompted the national parks to actively promote the activity. For commercial operators, the main challenge is in attracting clientele. The chances of converting self-guided ski tourers to purchasers of services will be very challenging. In addition to the park system, local alpine clubs and societies provide access to over 40 public backcountry huts to ski tourers at little or no cost. Anecdotal evidence suggests capacity is rarely exceeded at these cabins.

7.6.4.2 IMPACTS/CONFLICTS

On Crown land, good terrain is likely to be valued by snowmobilers but the presence of mechanized transportation of any form (helicopters, snow-cats, snowmobiles) will be problematic for ski touring development. Still, the actual area needed for ski touring is not that large (e.g. 20 square kilometres) compared to other backcountry users like heli-skiing and snowmobiling. Although pristine environments are preferred by ski tourers they may be able to co-exist within heli-skiing areas if operators are willing to cooperate. It is also generally recognized that the presence of ski tourers does not significantly affect heli-skiing and cat-skiing operations. On the other hand, snowmobiles and backcountry skiers do not mix well and the existence of other winter commercial tenures can have a negative impact on the amount of terrain available to initiate a ski touring business.

Forest tenures are also problematic for ski touring as the activity relies heavily on unmodified landscapes as a principal attractant. Although most ski touring activity takes place in the alpine and subalpine zones where forestry values are minimal, visually altered landscapes are visible for miles and negatively affect the experience.

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[44] Outdoor Recreation in America, p 184, Clayne R. Jensen, 1995.

[45] SnowSports Industries America, 1999.

7.6.4.3 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Infrastructure requirements for ski touring are minimal as the lack of development and access to wilderness is what attracts users in the first place. However, convenience of access and more backcountry accommodation will attract more users. Road access, or in some cases other forms of motorized transportation, to within a reasonable distance of the activity is a critical factor in the success of a ski touring business. Secure vehicle parking at trail heads, access to daily avalanche forecasts, and the availability of backcountry huts and cabins are advantageous for ski tourers who are out for a number of days.

There are major infrastructure requirements for cross-country skiing as access, parking, signage, rentals, hospitality services, hut and fee collection, ski patrol, grooming and off-season trail maintenance all have to be looked after. Still, this has not stopped some cross-country ski areas from being transformed into multi-use, winter playgrounds or resort areas.[46] This is to have a broader market appeal including couples and families. Resorts such as Whistler have seen cross-country ski visitation grow at a faster rate than downhill visits through investments in facilities and services.

Any development of a nordic centre would require access to Crown tenure to justify the economic costs of development. This way, non-compatible activities can be controlled and restricted. Given that a nordic centre should be located within a reasonable dstance of its market the cost and availability of land may be a major issue (e.g. if private lands need to be purchased). Given adequate financial resources, the landscape can be modified as necessary to accommodate the required terrain characteristics for a quality facility.

7.6.4.4 OVERALL POTENTIAL

There is potential for some immediate modest growth in the local, regional and international adventure recreation markets, principally among winter backcountry users. Focused promotional efforts will be required to increase exposure, and in this sense, not having any national parks in the region is a disadvantage. In the Canadian Rockies, Parks Canada is actively trying to convert more international visitors from touring travellers to ecotourists (and thereby consumers of ski touring products). Again, this may be best achieved by associating the activity with hut or lodge-based operations.

In spite of the favourable market trends, the ski touring product will be difficult to expand in the Kispiox. The main area of competition is the southern Canadian Rockies (Jasper, Canmore, Banff, Golden, Revelstoke) where the product quality is recognized worldwide and heavily promoted by both the national and provincial park systems. Even commercial operators there have difficulty attracting clientele because between the park system and local alpine clubs and societies, there is relatively inexpensive access to the public backcountry hut system. The best commercial potential will be for ski touring packaged around lodge and resort development. There is some opportunity for multi-activity packages involving activities such as downhill skiing (Hudson's Bay Mountain or Shames), cross-country skiing, snowmobiling and ice climbing.

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[46] SkiTrax, p.29, December/Holiday 1999.

The potential for cross-country skiing is only moderate because of the lack of infrastructure and accommodation. While natural features such as varied terrain are important, the built environment is critical – that means things like night lighting, parking, clear signage, high-quality and well-maintained equipment, transportation services and the availability of multi-activity packages can really broader the appeal, but will take a long period of development in the Kispiox.

MARKET & SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA			
UNITS:		South Unit	North Unit
Markets	Demand	**Low**: low participation rates, niche-oriented. X-country demand is regional, touring demand is more diverse.	
	Competition	**Medium**: many areas are better-known as touring destinations (e.g. National Parks) and X-country ski centres.	
	Overall potential	**Low-Medium**: good resources, but distance from markets a barrier, and conflicts with snowmobiling problematic.	**Low**: lack of infrastructure and services.
Impact/ Conflict	Use	**Low**: relatively low impacts in confined areas for both X-country and touring.	
	Community / Social	**Low**: Use can be easily controlled and should not conflict with community uses.	
Business Develop-ment Needs	Crown tenure	**Low-Medium**: X-country could be done near settlement areas, wilderness attributes key for touring (park use permits often preferred by operators).	
	Infrastructure	**High**: hospitality, trail, hut infrastructure all required.	**High**: investments in public and private infrastructure.
	Capital	**Low-High**: low basic capital requirements for guides, higher if huts developed, medium to high for communities or operators wanting to develop full-service nordic facilities.	
Level of community support		**Low**: conforms to economic development goals.	**Low**: low priority.
Employment opportunities		**Medium**: any increases in ski touring or cross country would probably be absorbed by existing operators.	
Opportunities		• Infrastructure and amenity development in high potential areas (Ashman Ridge, Mulwain Creek, Red Rose, Mt Seaton, Natlan Peak) • Hut-to-hut ski touring (Kispiox Range) • Linkages to hut and lodges • Multi-day, multi-experience tours (Ski touring, snowmobiling, ski-mountaineering, snowshoeing, XC skiing). • Cross marketing to Hudson's Bay and Shames visitors.	• Cat-skiing at Bell II

7.6.5 High Opportunity Areas (Ski Touring)

Polygon Names	Polygon Names
Ashman	Kuldo
Seven Sisters South	Bell 2
Skeena West (see map 2)	Atna
Kitwanga (see map 2)	Seaton Blunt
Kispiox (see map 2)	Thoen French

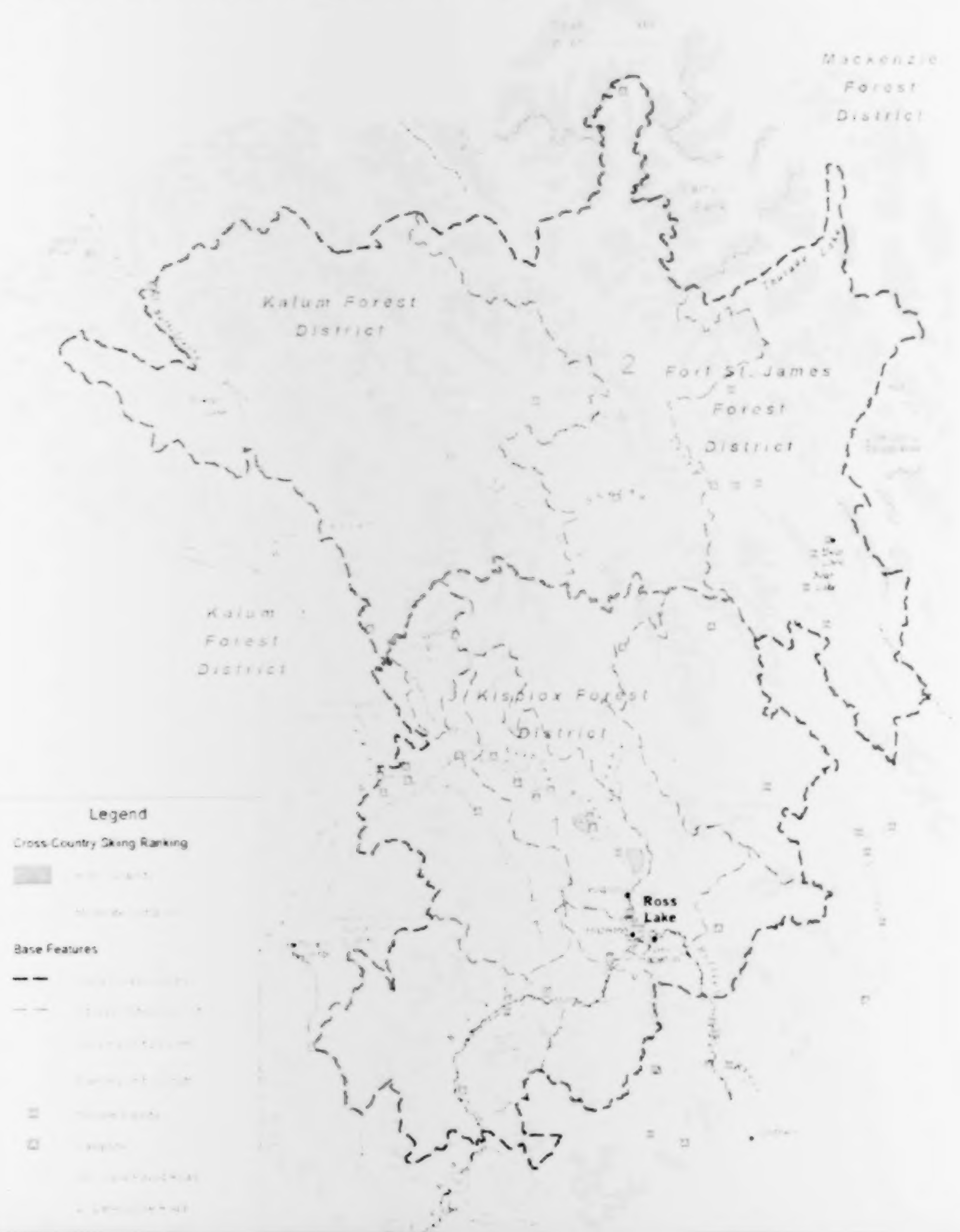
7.6.6 Cross-Country and Ski Touring Maps

On the following pages are two tourism suitability maps (2) for the ***Nordic Skiing / Ski Touring*** product (cross-country skiing & ski touring).

Kispiox Tourism Opportunity Study

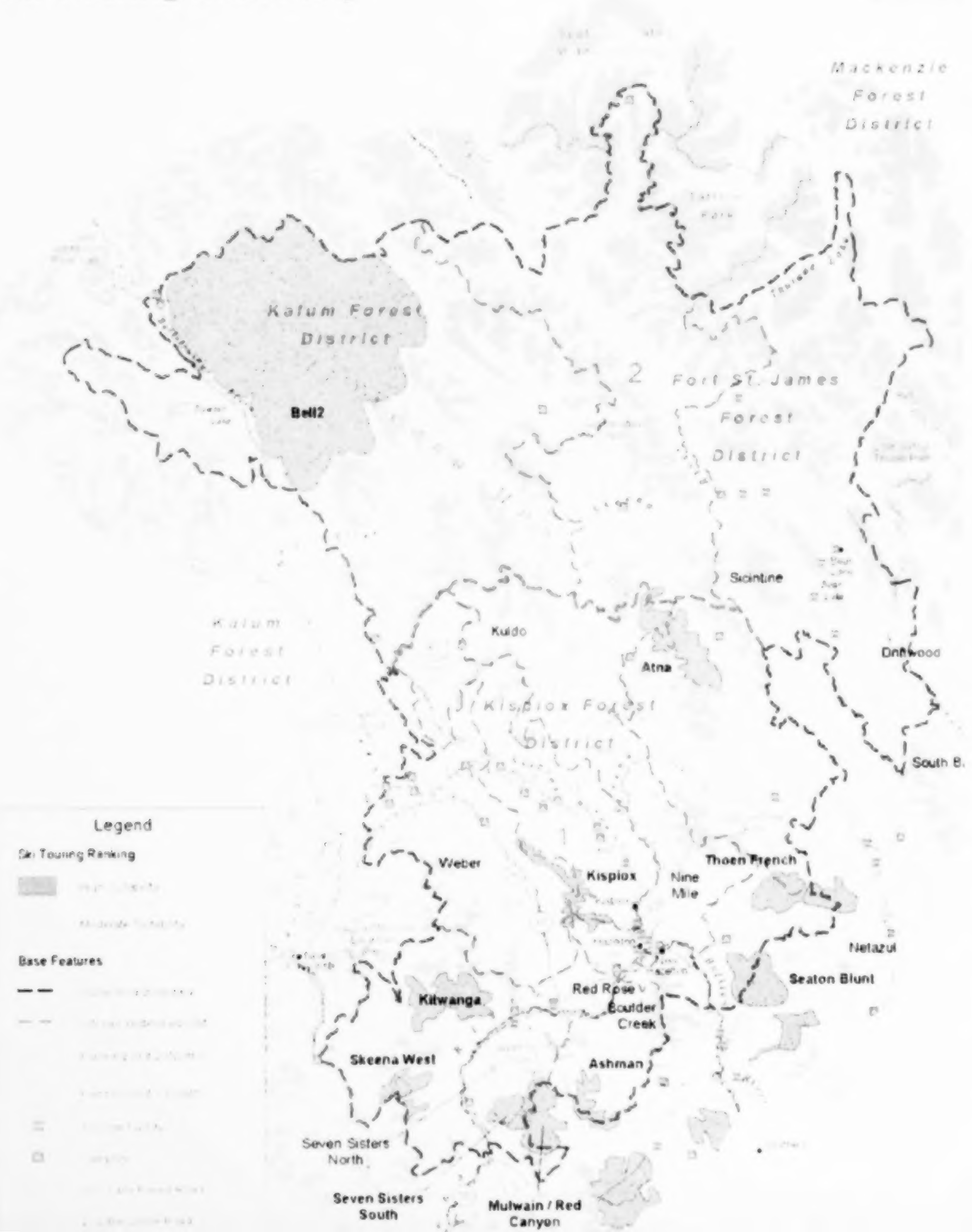
Cross-Country Skiing Suitability

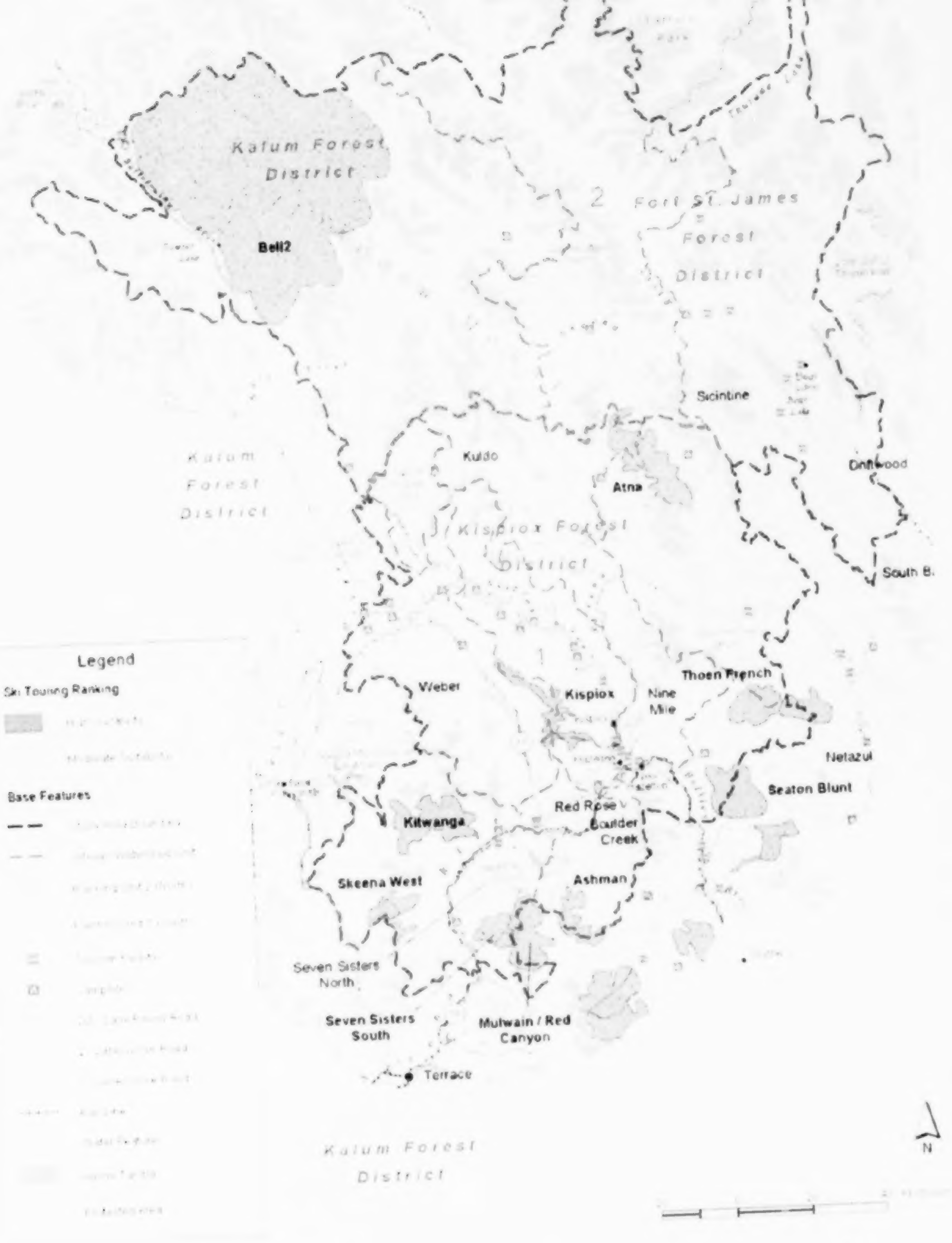
British Columbia


Mackenzie Forest District
Kalum Forest District
2
Fort St. James Forest District
Kalum Forest District
3
Kispiox Forest District
1
Ross Lake
Legend
Cross-Country Skiing Ranking
Base Features

Kalum Forest District
2
Fort St. James Forest District
Kalum Forest District
Kispiox Forest District
1
Ross Lake
Terrace
Kalum Forest District
N
Legend
Cross-Country Skiing Ranking
Moderate Capability
Base Features

Kispiox Tourism Opportunity Study
Ski Touring Suitability


Mackenzie Forest District
Kalum Forest District
Bell2
2
Fort St. James Forest District
Sicintine
Kalum Forest District
Kuldo
Atna
Driftwood
Kispiox Forest District
South B.
1
Legend
Ski Touring Ranking
High Suitability
Moderate Suitability
Base Features
Weber
Kispiox
Nine Mile
Thoen French
Netazul
Seaton Blunt
Kitwanga
Red Rose
Boulder Creek
Skeena West
Ashman
Seven Sisters North
Seven Sisters South
Mulwain / Red Canyon


Kalum Forest District
Bell2
2
Fort St. James Forest District
Sicintine
Kuldo
Atna
Driftwood
Kalum Forest District
Kispiox Forest District
South B.
1
Legend
Ski Touring Ranking
Base Features
Weber
Kispiox
Nine Mile
Thoen French
Netazul
Seaton Blunt
Red Rose
Boulder Creek
Kitwanga
Skeena West
Ashman
Seven Sisters North
Seven Sisters South
Mulwain / Red Canyon
Terrace
N
Kalum Forest District

7.7 Road Touring

7.7.1 Description

This activity focuses on driving and sightseeing, both on highway and in cities/towns. While this type of touring is primarily self-guided, guided bus and motorcoach tours are also considered. Area related cassette tapes have also been used to enhance self-guided auto tours. Sightseeing is an activity very closely associated with automobile touring. There are opportunities for touring on gravel secondary roads where comfortable and safety equipped large sport utility vehicles are a preferred mode of transport.

Road tours require high scenic values and corresponding viewpoints and points of interest. Tours can be linked to a destination with an outstanding feature, lodge, community or as part of a greater regional / provincial tour. Tours can be linear or circle. A tour can be part of other tours such as a water cruise and rail tour.

Road tours are ideal for those individuals seeking an adventure in safety and comfort and for those who do not choose or are unable to take their own vehicles.

7.7.2 Regional Overview

Strengths	Scenic highways. Potential link between highway tours and the Skeena River. First Nations heritage sites including totem poles, Ksan museum, Battle Hill at Kitwanga and museum being developed at Gitanyow. Potential to drive to alpine on 9 Mile Mountain and the Comeau Creek Roads
Weaknesses	Few road side attractions or interpretive signage. Lack of themed development in some of the high potential tourism areas. Industrial traffic.
Concerns	Quality of the infrastructure. Scenic management of timber harvesting. Deactivation of secondary gravel roads. First Nations would need to be involved in development of any tours with a First Nations' heritage component.

7.7.3 Resource Assessment

The Kispiox Study Area includes Highway 16 that connects the interior of British Columbia with the coast and Highway 37, which begins at Kitwanga and culminates at the Yukon border. There are no paved circuits contained in the Study Area.

7.7.3.1 SOUTH UNIT

Paved road tour potential includes:

Highway 16 and 37 provide paved road tour opportunities linked to the rich cultural heritage and history of the area. Visible cultural features can be viewed along the way.

Highway 37 from Kitwanga to Cranberry Junction on is a paved road that runs along Kitwanga River, Kitwancool Lake and Cranberry River. Timber harvesting has modified the visual landscape along the corridor. The valley corridor is somewhat reminiscent of the Banff/Jasper highway as most of the landscape appears undeveloped, even though much of the area has been logged. Most of the peaks are relatively distant and unremarkable. The adjacent Kitwange and Cranberry Rivers have the potential to provide pleasant picnic sites.

Highway 16 within the boundaries of the Kispiox Forest District. The Highway runs along the Skeena River offering occasional views of the river and the peaks of the Rocher Deboule, Kitsegukla and Seven Sisters mountain ranges. Vegetative screening – as well as a limited number of pullouts and viewpoints along the highway – limit viewing opportunities. Interpretive signs are uncommon. A side road to the mouth of the Gitseguecla River provides an excellent picnic location and, in season, an opportunity to observe 1st Nations fisheries. The river and mountain scenery can be spectacular during good weather.

Gravel road tour potentials include:

Mitten Main to Helen Lake Forest Service Road passes through the Kispiox River valley and joins Hazelton with Cranberry junction. Access to the Kispiox River and the many lakes that dot the valley provides an important opportunity for tying in nature observation to the tour opportunities. The roads are utilized by industrial activity, quite narrow in places and care must be exercised when using them. The opportunity exists to plan tours to avoid peaks in industrial activity.

Circle tour potentials include:

Regional Circle tour opportunities can provide a regional link between Hazelton, Kitwanga, New Aiyansh, and Terrace.

Regional Circle Tour linking the communities of Hazelton, Kitwanga, New Aiyansh and Terrace. Starting in Hazelton (and 'Ksan) along the backroads to Kitwanga and along Highway 37 to Cranberry Junction to New Aiyansh, the Nisgaa Memorial Lava Bed Park and culminating in Terrace or returning to Hazelton along Highway 16. This tour provides tremendous opportunities for Cultural Exposition, Nature Observation and Historical Interpretation.

Hazelton / Kitwanga Circle Tour starting in Hazelton along Kitwanga backroad and returning to Hazelton via Highway 16. Trip could provide from half day to full day experience depending on stops. This trip could offer pastoral rural scenery, dramatic mountain views, river access, and First Nations culture

Tour starting in ***Hazelton to Highway 37 and Cranberry Junction returning via the Mitten Main and Helen Lake FSR***. This trip would be over 200 kilometers in length and would be a day trip requiring First Nations and non-aboriginal historical interpretation as well as wildlife and nature observation opportunities. May be linked to a destination lodge.

Road and boat link tours allow for a variety of experiences.

Link tours between the Skeena River, Railways and the road tour are possible between Hazelton and Terrace.

Highway 16 plus a river tour between Hazelton ('Ksan) and Terrace. The opportunity lies to establish a tour using a paddlewheeler, large boat or even a jet boat along the Skeena River. The tour will be closely linked to the First Nations heritage and to the rivers history. A rail tour can also be incorporated.

7.7.3.2 NORTH UNIT

Very limited opportunities. Highway 37 touches the northeast corner of this unit with the remainder either being unroaded or etched by industrial gravel road.

Associated products include motorized water, day hikes, lodges. Culture / Heritage, nature observation restaurants and/or catering services. These Culture / Heritage, nature observation products are integral to a successful road tour.

Supportive Infrastructure: There is lack of Interpretive and directional signs, viewpoints, pullouts and other road tour associated infrastructure. Development and construction would benefit the road tour opportunities.

7.7.4 Market and Socio-economic Assessment

7.7.4.1 MARKETS

Road touring activity focuses on driving and sightseeing, on highways and major roads and in cities/towns. While this type of touring is primarily self-guided, guided bus and motorcoach tours are also part of the market. In the US and Canada over half of the total population reportedly participates in sightseeing, and participation rates have been growing. Short-haul and regional markets are primarily travelling in personal vehicles while long-haul visitors are more likely to visit sightseeing attractions and to spend a greater proportion of their money on packaged tours.

In general, the further a tourist had to come to get to BC, the more likely sightseeing was the primary purpose of their trip. Visitors from Europe, long-haul US and Eastern Canada are also more likely to visit sightseeing attractions and to spend a greater proportion of their money on packaged tours. Since many of these tours are offered with bus or motorcoach as transportation, it follows that the long-haul US and European visitors are also more likely to use buses for transportation. By far the majority of visitors use car or motorcycle for transportation while in BC, suggesting that most visitors take self-guided sightseeing trips.

As mentioned above, the further travellers have come from, the more likely they are to participate in a guided, packaged tour. These travellers value the knowledge of the area by the tour company and the convenience of being able to see all of the major sights without significant planning. Packaged tour travellers are willing to pay for the convenience of having most of their sightseeing, transportation, accommodation and food arranged for them. Independent travellers value the flexibility and privacy of travelling on their own according to their own schedule. They may have planned a detailed itinerary before arrival, or plan their trip along the way, enabling them to experience certain venues for longer periods of time (perhaps with unplanned overnight stays).

Competition for the road touring market remains intense. Other regions in the province, Alberta, Yukon and Alaska have targeted the Alaska Highway visitor with attraction programs. Still, many highway visitors to the region could be attracted to spend more time and money locally, or are actively looking for something to do but have been unable to find an experience to meet their expectations. This means the tourism industry will have to provide more attractions, interpretation and accommodation and make a stronger appeal to the free independent travellers.

7.7.4.2 IMPACTS/CONFLICTS

The road touring product is oriented toward highway markets and front country facilities, so its access and use of the backcountry is minimal compared to other outdoor products. Still, issues such as visual quality, participation in land use planning and relations with forest companies are considered important to the future development of the sector.[47] Where travellers are being encouraged to use secondary roads, then potential conflicts with industrial and logging truck traffic will be a concern.

7.7.4.3 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Government tenure is generally not a significant issue with the road tour product as most tourism services are delivered from town centres and private property.

The key to unlocking the potential of this market is to develop along four key dimensions, including staging areas, attractions, services and tour corridors. The primary mode of transportation in the Kispiox is private vehicle (RVs and cars) and most travellers are on their way to somewhere else in the region, or Alaska. They have to be given safe and convenient opportunities to explore more corridors in the region and then these opportunities have to be actively promoted. A themed First Nations cultural heritage interpretive tour, for example, that packages together attractions, interpretive sites, accommodation and dining could work.

Public infrastructure, especially highways and roads, is also critical to future development, as it will determine the quality of visitor experience. This involves mainly highway signage and road conditions, both of which need significant upgrading so visitors are presented with better information and direction about more touring options. There are few opportunities for circle tours or routes in the study area, but cultural heritage themed routing would have strong appeal to road touring markets.

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[47] TREK International Inc., 2000. COTA Membership Survey Results: Land Use Issues October/November 2000, Council of Tourism Associations of BC.

Lastly, in order to compete in the tourist market regionally and worldwide, communities in the Kispiox will need to find ways to coordinate their development and marketing efforts that emphasize an area's distinctive features in order to draw tourists. This includes working with other communities in the Bulkley and Kalum areas, for example, where broader regional road tours would have more potential.

7.7.4.4 CONCLUSIONS

The highways and main roads in the study area could handle more tourist traffic during peak season, and the road tour product could be developed hand-in-hand with much needed tourism infrastructure to enhance all outdoor product development in the study area. Areas of opportunity and challenge include the following:

- Developing Kitwanga and the Hazeltons as higher profile staging areas through continued highway and parking improvements.

Development of themed road tours for example:

- A Kitwanga to Terrace tour via the Cranberry FSR could be promoted and linked to heritage and volcano interpretation in the Nass, heritage interpretation in Kitwanga, grease trail interpretation in the Upper Kispiox and access to a full variety of recreation possibilities related to Swan Lake, Upper Kispiox and Seven Sisters parks.
- A loop tour connecting Prince Rupert and Hazelton using two of three possible transportation options: Via Rail, River Boat or Bus/Van/Car. A whole variety of secondary activity options are possible along the way particularly around Seven Sisters.
- A themed tour out of Hazelton connecting K'san with a variety of short-excursion recreational opportunities further up the Kispiox River, including rafting and fishing.

More packaging and special promotion between existing operators such as fishing lodges and First Nations operators to encourage travellers to get off Highway 16 and explore the region.

- Aggressive selling of these packages through the Travel InfoCentres.
- Strategic infrastructure:
- Interpretive centre in Kitwanga.
- Roadside stands for distributing arts & crafts, packaged salmon, mushroom products, unique products (e.g. Gitsegucla hemp seeds), traditional prepared foods and even fresh garden produce from market gardens.
- Interpretive signage along all routes.

MARKET & SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA			
UNITS:		**South Unit**	**North Unit**
Markets	Demand	**Medium**: average growth rates and low spending.	
	Competition	**High**: Alaska Highway, Cariboo, Yukon and Alaska itself are all targeting this market.	
	Overall potential	**Medium**: Good marketability with K'san; opportunities for multi-activity development.	**Low**: remote, limited opportunities around Bell II.
Impact/ Conflict	Use	**Low**: some concern with industrial traffic on some routes.	
	Community / Social	**Low**: existing industry geared to highway markets already.	
Business Development Needs	Crown tenure	**Low**: most development would be on private or IR land.	
	Infrastructure	**High**: more infrastructure and attractions needed to encourage more activity.	
	Capital	**Medium-High**: communities and businesses will need to increase investment in buildings and facilities.	
Level of community support		**High**: strong support expressed during workshops.	
Employment opportunities		**Medium-High**: increased touring could lead to new business development. A large development such as a new interpretive centre would generate significant job benefits.	
	Opportunities	• Themed tours (First Nations, wildlife, nature viewing, mushrooms) • Circle tour (Kitwanga-Nass-Terrace-Skeena, Kispiox Trail) • Rough road tours (Cedarvale, Kitwanga backroads) • Linkages between First Nations interpretation and outdoor adventure products in Swan Lake, Upper Kispiox and Seven Sisters, as well as numerous river activities. • Train- river- bus loop tour connecting Hazelton, Kitwanga, Terrace and Prince Rupert. • Linkages to agri-tourism (e.g. Gitsegucla Hemp). • Linkages to frontcountry activities in and around the Hazeltons. • Possible loop tours through the Bulkley FD via the Nichyeskwa connector road.	• Potential road through Tommy Jack Pass • Access to rafting, canoeing, kayaking opportunities from Kemess Access Road • Access to heritage interpretation, lake fishing and wildlife viewing from Highway 37

7.7.5 High Opportunity Areas

Route		
Highway 37 to Cranberry junction	Highway 16	Mitten Lake FSR

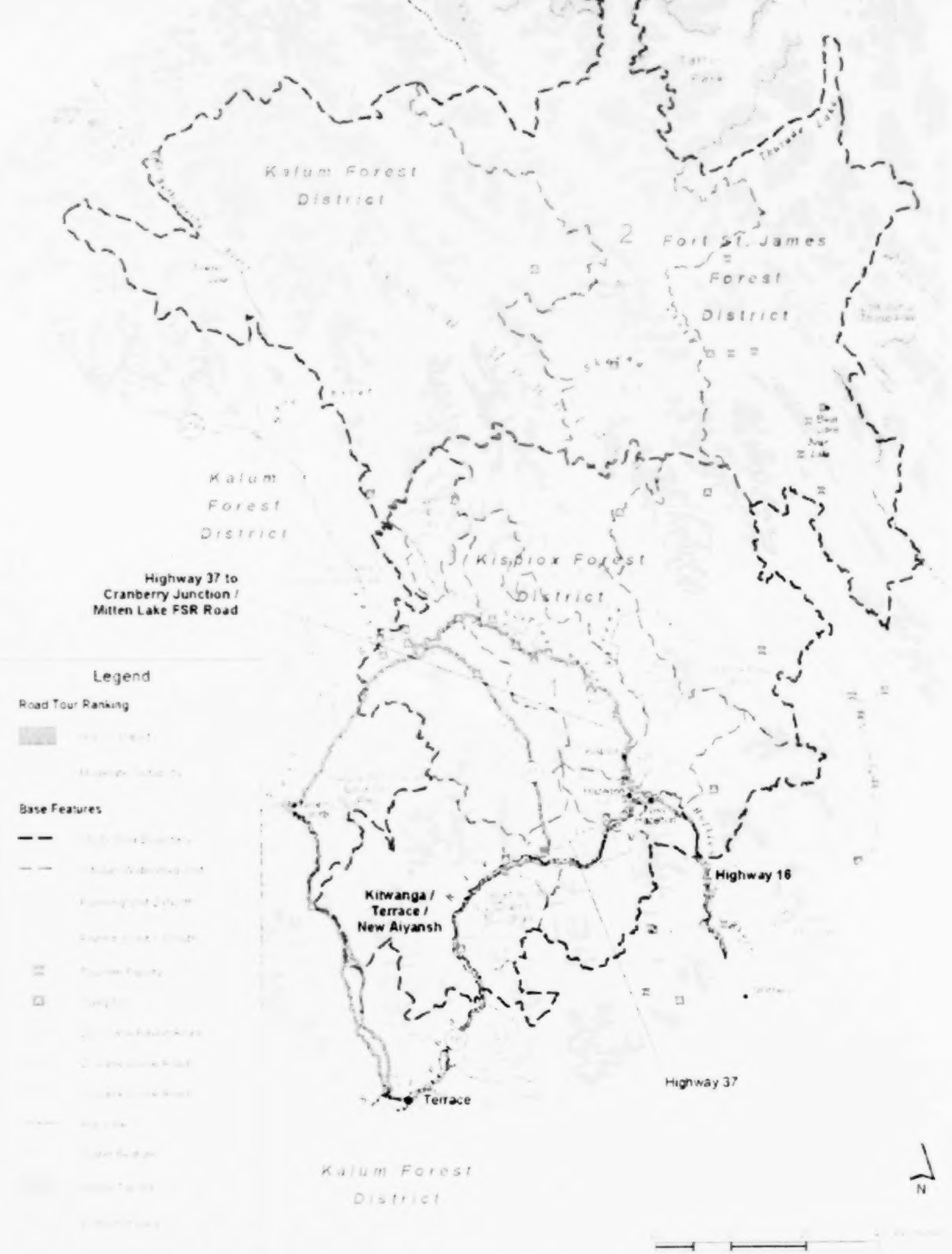
7.7.6 Road Touring Map

On the following page is the tourism suitability map for the Road Touring product (Exhibit 26).

Kispiox Tourism Opportunity Study

Road Tour Suitability

Mackenzie Forest District
Kalum Forest District
Fort St. James Forest District
Kalum Forest District
Kispiox Forest District
2
Highway 37 to Cranberry Junction / Mitten Lake FSR Road
Highway 16
Kitwanga / Terrace / New Aiyansh
Legend
Road Tour Ranking
Base Features


Kalum Forest District
2
Fort St. James Forest District
Kalum Forest District
Kispiox Forest District
Highway 37 to Cranberry Junction / Mitten Lake FSR Road
Legend
Road Tour Ranking
Moderate Suitability
Base Features
Tourism Facility
Kitwanga / Terrace / New Aiyansh
Highway 16
Highway 37
Terrace
Kalum Forest District
N

7.8 Summer Trail Products

7.8.1 Description

Trail products include hiking (generally frontcountry, mid-country or from a lodge), backpacking (midcountry/backcountry), animal assisted, such as llama or horse packing (primarily backcountry) or horseback riding (front country to backcountry). The activities take place on trails or off trail, terrain permitting. Mountain biking is not included in this product description as it is noted to conflict with other trail products. If suitable for the area, it is discussed separately.

Frontcountry and midcountry *hikes* are primarily single day. Backcountry trips are primarily multi-day. Midcountry trips can be either single or multi-day. Day use is usually based from a lodge, resort or guest ranch, ideally in an attractive natural setting where the operation of a ranch is feasible, and where there is easy accessibility to a network of trails. Multi-day trips or *backpacking*, set in the midcountry or backcountry, usually requireing wilderness or near wilderness settings, and cabins or camps to accommodate recreationists. Accessibility to trails is required and alpine or sub-alpine zones are a preferred destination if possible. However, steep, rocky or boggy areas are considered as undesirable for commercial ventures because they are dangerous and can create too much liability for operators.

The ***llama packing*** product is essentially a hiking product, wherein llamas are used to pack the gear with participants walking or hiking alongside. Llamas are very sure-footed, and can access most areas that a hiker is willing to go. There is also some novelty associated with the animals and this can be an attractant in itself, although the prime motivation for participants is a wilderness experience in scenic remote terrain. Llamas are said to cause less trail damage than horses however, there is a concern that lamas may be a potential vector for moving cloven hoofed diseases and parasites common to domestic animals into wild populations.

In the ***Horse riding and packing*** product, camping gear and food is packed on horseback and the guest rides alongside on another horse. Trails are the key ingredient for the viability of any horse-packing operation, and therefore trails (and roads) are the primary screen. Good trails or narrow gravel roads are preferred; as these provide ideal footing for the horses, yet provide the rider with a sense of being part of the surroundings. Wider roads serve mainly as access to narrower ones or trails. Slopes are the next major consideration, as steeper slopes quickly become awkward for horse and rider, and introduce the undesirable possibility of accidents and associated liability. Features such as attractive scenery, cabins, waterfalls, lakes etc. can enhance the experience. Alpine areas, if accessible, are a considerable attractant.

Generally, ***hiking and backpacking*** are self-guided. (although a number of hiking guides do operate in the Bulkley Valley) Horseback riding is generally associated with a guide. Llama or horse packing typically involve a guide/outfitter who offers overnight (or longer) pack trips into wilderness areas and which naturally include camping, cooking and other guide services. Operators offer either moving trips (move each day) or day trips from a base camp.

Established trails require maintenance to assure their viability and safety. A commitment to undertake this responsibility lies with either the provincial government (with a focus on Parks, Forest Service Recreation trails, community forests), local governments (regional parks), non-profit organizations (often times for activity specific use, such as crosscountry skiing or snowmobiling) or private landowners (often associated with horseback riding).

7.8.2 Regional Overview

Strengths	Variable scenery and natural features. Established trails. Maze of logging roads., Many trails near local communities. Evidence of mining history at several locations
Weaknesses	No commitment for long term maintenance of trails by various agencies. No established campsites associated with trails. No current information generally available on existing trail conditions, local guidebook is somewhat out of date and no forum is maintained to track day to day conditions (mud/snow/wildlife etc) Many trails are wet and subject to degradation from horse use.
Concerns	Conflicting uses. Industrial logging/mining activities may physically impact heritage trails and open areas to motorized use. These same activities often affect the visual landscape adversely, particularly for clients looking for a wilderness experience. Conflicts may occur in alpine areas that are accessible to both motorized and non-motorized uses.

7.8.3 Resource Assessment

The trails within the Kispiox Study Area are numerous and varied, developed over time by First Nations for gathering, trapping and for travelling to trade, by, miners, and by recreation users. Some older forestry roads may be suitable for the trail product. The following table provides a brief description of the trails in the Study Area. The trails identified are suitable for day hiking, multi-day hiking or backpacking, and horse riding. Some have a historic significance. The most notable trails for tourism development are those that access the alpine/subalpine and areas in close proximity to the population and access centers. Camping is dispersed. The campsites in the Study Area are linked to roads and there are no established sites identified with the trails.

The trail product can be linked to the culture and heritage of the region through interpretation and awareness building. The Gitxan First Nations people have historically derived their sustenance from the bounty of the land. The abundance allowed time for arts and culture. The First Nations continued presence as a people and the subtle historical evidence of their relationship to the natural surroundings can heighten the feeling of mystery and wonder for the visitor.

Hiking (frontcountry and midcountry) and ***Backpacking*** (midcountry and backcountry) opportunities can take place in the many trails and roads in the Kispiox Study Area. There are a wide range of easy to challenging and difficult trails.

- The primary focuses for the front-country are the trails close to the urban centers of Hazelton and Kitwanga and along the Highway 16.
- The focus for the mid-country are the trails associated with the Seven Sisters, the middle and southern parts of the Rocher Deboule, Kitwanga (Skeena West), Thomlinson, Blunt / Seton and Thoen/Netazul.
- The focus for the backcountry are those associated with the Atna Range, the Telegraph trail, the ancient trade and grease trails and the BCR rail grade (at the north of the end of Steel). Other trails that do not seem distant but can be regarded as backcountry include the old,

unmaintained trails up Brian Boru Creek (off the Juniper Creek Road), across the spine of the Rocher Deboule and down Corya Creek (near Moricetown).

Llama packing can take place in the more remote backcountry areas. There is a concern that the llamas may carry infectious diseases to indigenous cloven hoofed mammals such as the Mountain Caribou , whose numbers are already in decline. Staging areas (trail heads) must be accessible by road. Suitable areas may include the mid-country mountain ranges near population centers (Seven Sisters, Kitseguecla, Kitwanga, Seton-Blunt, Rocher Deboule) to the backcountry (Thoen, Neatzul, Atna and others).

Horse packing and riding has potential. There are a number of opportunities associated with the few rolling alpine ridges and associated trails in the Study Area. These include trips within the Kispiox Valley and to Sedina Mountain and the Moonlit trail, the Seven Sisters on old mining roads, Kitseguecla (forest roads only), Kitwanga (mostly forest roads), Seton-Blunt (the main current access route is too wet for horse use), Rocher Deboule(Perhaps on the Boulder Creek and Juniper roads) to the backcountry opportunities of the Thoen (understand this trail is wet), Netalzul, Atna and others. Horse use on wet trails accelerates the deterioration of trails dramatically and is not advised.

The following table lists the trails suitable for the trail-based product.

SOUTH	
Frontcountry Trails	**General Description:** Low elevation trails close to the communities and road access. **Primary Trails:** Date Creek Interpretive Forest. Rossvale Ski Trails. Nine Mile Mountain road. Comeau Creek Road. Watson Lake **Type of trail product:** Day hikes. horse riding and packing. **Comments:** Nine Mile ridge sub-alpine is readily accessed by road. These trails are predominantly for local use. Date Creek Interpretative Forest - contains short interpretive trails. Rossvale Ski Trails - 3.6 km trail circles Rossvale Lake. Novice levels of skiing. **Other summer activities:** Mountain biking. ATV
Hazelton / Kispiox Range	**General Description:** Readily accessed rolling sub-alpine. **Primary Trails:** . Moonlit (Hazelton ridge) **Type of trail product** Hiking. Horse riding **Comments:** Moonlit trail accesses Hazelton ridge with potential for access to the Kispiox Range. A potential for multi-day activities. Recently upgraded trail with wet areas. These trails are affected by the impacts of motorized use. **Other summer activities:** Mountain biking. ATV

SOUTH	
Heritage trails **(mid and back-country)**	**General Description:** The heritage trails **Primary Trails:** There are a number of heritage trails, many are undefined and difficult to locate. These include- Sweetin / Kuldo, Suskwa Pass / Fort Babine, Dominion Telegraph, Trails to the headwaters of Sediesh & Shewiliba Creeks **Type of trail product:** Day hikes, backpacking, animal assisted (llama), horse riding and packing. **Comments:** Parts of these trails are overgrown and may be difficult to detect in places. Timber harvesting has obliterated sections of some trails. *Old Kuldo Hiking trail-* (4 km) interpretive hiking trail to Galdo'o and incorporating a section of the Yukon Telegraph Trail. Sweetin / Kuldo (Cranberry to the Upper Skeena). *Suskwa Pass / Fort Babine* - First Nations trading trail later used by miners to link Fort Babine with Hazelton (late 1800's). Lower valley is partly upgraded and maintained. *Collins Overland Telegraph* (began in 1862, an overland telegraph to Asia and Europe that was abandoned for a cable beneath the Atlantic) and the Yukon Telegraph (was created to as a Canadian response to the discovery of gold in the Yukon and the influx of many Americans). Utilized First Nations trails. *Trail* to the headwaters of Sediesh & Shewiliba Creeks **Other summer activities:** ATV
First Nations trails **(back-country)**	**General Description:** The heritage trails **Primary Trails:** There are a number of heritage trails, many have had little use in recent years and may be difficult to locate. These include- *Atnas, (same as Kisgegas/Kuldo), Sperry, Rosenthal valleys & Goathead Pass, Gisgegas - Kuldo Trail (Shelf Ridge), Bear Lake to Gisgegas, Babine Grease trail* **Type of trail product:** Backpacking, animal assisted (llama), horse riding and packing. **Comments:** Most of the trails are overgrown and difficult to detect. Timber harvesting has obliterated sections of some trails. These trails access areas with high potential for 1st Nations interpretation. *Kisgegas* Trail - Cat track/trail from Gisgegas Reserve to south end of Atna Range, berry picking area. Refer to discussion under the Cultural Heritage Product. **Other summer activities:** ATV.
Rocher Deboule Range **(mid-country)**	**General Description:** Dramatic landscape with jagged peaks, steep slopes, alpine, subalpine, small glacier, many cirque basins, several with small lakes. Blue Lake. Climbing rock, several extensive historic mining areas. **Primary Trails:** *Station Creek, Chicago Creek, Blue Lake, Pangea Trail, Brian Boru, Juniper, Boulder Creek.* **Type of trail product:** Day hikes, backpacking, animal assisted (llama) **Comments:** Many of the trails follow old mining roads. The trails are in various states of maintenance. **Other summer activities:** Mountaineering (demanding terrain, poor ski mountaineering), Rock climbing, Mountain biking, ATV
Thomlinson **(mid-country)**	**General Description:** Mt. Thomlinson is a rugged isolated range of mountains. **Primary Trails:** *Mt Thomlinson* and Sedina (directly to the south and connected by ridges) **Type of trail product:** Backpacking, animal assisted (llama), horse riding and packing. **Comments:** Suitable for the trail product and mountaineering with an upgraded trail to the subalpine. Mt. Thomlinson requires technical skill (mountaineering). Sedina is readily accessed by an old mining trail (upgraded in 1998). **Other summer activities:** Mountaineering, Ski mountaineering, ATV

SOUTH	
Seven Sisters / Kitseguecla **(mid-country)**	**General Description:** Dramatic landscape with jagged peaks, steep slopes, alpine, subalpine, small glacier, moraine, many cirque basins, several with small lakes. **Primary Trails:** Seven Sisters - *Boulder Creek, Whiskey Creek, Coyote Creek, Cedarvale, Oliver Creek, Flint Creek, Watson Lake.* Kitseguecla - *Hankin* Lakes and Plateau and **Type of trail product:** Day hike, backpacking, animal assisted (llama), horse riding and packing. **Comments:** Trails provide access to the ridges, lakes, subalpine, alpine and the base of glacier / icefields. **Other summer activities:** Mountaineering, mountain biking, ATV.
Skeena West **(mid-country)**	**General Description:** Travel from valley bottom to Sub-alpine ridges. **Primary Trails:** Kitwanga Mtn, Wilson Creek, Sedan Creek, , Douglas/Lorne, Insect Lookout is accessed by an old, unmaintained road, an old forest lookout building provides fine views of the Seven Sisters Range across the valley **Type of trail product:** Mid to back country, day hike, backpacking, animal assisted (llama), horse riding and packing. **Comments:** Trails provide access to the ridges of the Kitwanga (Nass) Range. **Other summer activities:** Mountain biking, ATV
Blunt/Seaton/ **(mid- country)** ***Thoen/Netalzul*** **(back-country)**	**General Description:** Dramatic landscape with jagged peaks, steep slopes, alpine, subalpine, small glacier, moraine, cirque basins, several with small lakes and rolling ridges. **Primary Trails:** *Thoen Basin Trail, Netalzul peak, Suskwa Pass/ Fort Babine* **Type of trail product:** Backcountry, backpacking, animal assisted (llama), horse riding/packing. **Comments:** *Thoen Basin Trail* - trail leads to A cirque basin. (the rolling alpine is further east towards French Peak and is not easily accessible from this trail) Netalzul peak, old mining road on north side of massif, not known if any use occurs **Other summer activities:** Mountaineering, ski mountaineering, ATV
Atna Range **(back-country)**	**General Description:** Dramatic landscape with jagged peaks, steep slopes, alpine, subalpine, extensive glaciers , moraines, glacial outwash plains, many cirque basins, several with small lakes. **Primary Trails:** *Damsumlo/Tommy Jack;* **Type of trail product:** Backcountry, backpacking, animal assisted (llama), horse riding and packing. **Comments:** Damsumlo/Tommy Jack - outfitter trail from Damsumlo Lake to Tommy Jack Pass **Other summer activities:** Mountain biking, ATV (increasing potential when the Tommy Jack road is built)
Sicintine, Driftwood & Connelly Ranges	**General Description:** Heritage trails and Guide Outfitter trails **Primary Trails:** Historic Fort St. James-Fort Connelly trail on the east side of Driftwood River, 1st Nations Kisgegas to Bear Lake trading trail, 1st Nations Trail through Kotsine Pass, various outfitter trails, not located on maps. Two plateaus on the east side of the Bait Range offer potential wilderness backpacking opportunities. **Type of Trail product:** backcountry, horse packing, animal assisted **Comments:** Other than outfitter trails, historic trails are likely to be overgrown and difficult to locate. Timber harvesting & roads have obliterated parts of some trails **Other summer activities:** ATV (increasing potential when roads are built)

NORTH	
Heritage trails	**General Description:** The heritage trails and Guide Outfitter trails **Primary Trails:** There are a number of heritage trails. many are undefined and difficult to locate. These include- *Bear Lake to Gisgegas. Nass to Skeena grease trail* through Canyon Lake. *trade route trails from Blackwater Lake through Groundhog Pass to the headwaters of the Skeena. Yukon Telegraph Trail* **Type of trail product:** backpacking. animal assisted (llama). horse riding and packing. **Comments:** Most of the trails are overgrown and difficult to detect. Timber harvesting has obliterated sections of some trails. *Yukon Telegraph trail* contains large intact sections along the north side of the Skeena river and heading up the Slamgeesh River. *Bear Lake to Gisgegas* - ancient trail. *BC Rail Grade* – railway grade offers potential for development of mountain biking. horse packing or wilderness backpacking. ATV products *Canyon Creek-Vile Creek* (Skeena to Nass watersheds) an ancient trade trail route from the upper reaches of the Nass River to the mid-reaches of the Skeena River and Kuldo (Galdo'o) village site **Other existing activities:** Snowmobiling. ATV

7.8.4 Resource Summary

South

The southern section of this unit is closely associated with the population centers, highways and roads. Trail heads can be readily accessed.

The northern and east section of this unit is less accessible.

North

There are limited opportunities for hiking and backpacking. There may be opportunities associated with backcountry horse tours.

Associated products: Hut systems, destination lodge, fishing, water activities can greatly enhance the trail product.

7.8.5 Market and Socio-economic Assessment

7.8.5.1 MARKETS

In Canada, **trail riding** adventurers tend to be fairly evenly distributed across all age groups, with a higher participation rate from females (53.3%) than males. They tend to travel with friends (27.0%) or in couples (26.7%). Two-thirds are from Canada, although a significant portion come from other countries (19.4%).[48] Countries with a high level of interest in trail riding include Germany. Competition is relatively low for this product as there are very few operators regionally, but short-haul markets that pass through the area have a wide selection of trail riding opportunities in neighbouring regions, include the Cariboo-Chilcotin, Prince George and the Alberta Rockies. Important secondary activities include river activities, hiking and nature observation.

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[48] Adventure Travel and Ecotourism in Canada: Strategic Framework for Development. p 3-32. 1997.

The **hiking** market in Canada has a very broad based demographic profile with an even distribution across age groups and by gender. BC and Canadian residents make up three quarters of the market, while equal shares of the remaining quarter are accounted for by US and overseas visitors. Hiking is a primary trip activity for Canadian travellers, with 32 percent, or 5.2 million, participating in hiking or walking on their last long overnight pleasure trip. Of all outdoor recreation activities, hiking has been one of the highest growing in terms of participation in the US. The US market grew by 93 percent from 24.7 million participants in 1982-1983 to 47.7 million participants in 1994-1995.[49] Hiking has a very good participation rate, and therefore high demand, among Europeans, especially Germans. Like trail riding, hiking is often combined with other activities such as wildlife viewing; camping and backpacking, all of which are experiencing increased participation levels. Many surveys combine hiking with backpacking for their statistics. As well, many operators include backpacking and extended trekking under the category of guided hikes.

Demand will continue to increase for hiking both as a primary activity and as a secondary activity in conjunction with other products. Because of its accessibility, low skill requirements, relative safety and instant appeal, growth rates among North American and European hiking markets are expected to continue to climb even as the overall population ages.

Trail riding is not expected to grow as strongly as hiking but nevertheless maintains an interest level that has yet to be exploited in the region. This may involved linking riding with the ranching/farming sector in the Bulkley Valley. The development of a multi-use trail network, particularly in the Smithers/Telkwa area could involve the shared use of working animals to defray the costs of operation.

There is extensive competition regionally, nationally and internationally for travellers interested in pursuing hiking. For the hiking enthusiast in pursuit of a challenging, wilderness trek products like the West Coast Trail, the Nootka Island Trail and Berg Lake Trail have well-earned reputations and regularly attract capacity visitation. The national and provincial park systems cater extensively to this market. Similarly, many communities and all parks have developed trail inventories and related services that create a safe and interesting product for the soft adventurer/participant.

7.8.5.2 IMPACTS/CONFLICTS

Trail riding and packing generally requires access to large tracts of Crown land where some trail development has taken place. Contact with other users, especially those using mechanized transportation, is seen as undesirable. Unaltered landscapes are preferred. Day use trail riding is more compatible with multi-use trails, as this product is not so highly associated with wilderness. However, the use of trails for multi-day wilderness trips needs to be planned relative to other uses, e.g. horse or llama packing and ATV or mountain bike tours or self-guided use are likely not compatible. Forest tenures can have a major impact on areas where trails have been developed for horse packing. Clients do not expect to see major human alteration of the landscape, especially logging.

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[49] National Survey on Recreation and the Environment, 1994-1995.

Hiking is usually compatible with other recreation uses in the area. Uncrowded trails are preferred, particularly those attracted to backcountry hiking. Visual and acoustic quality is important so the quality of the experience is sometimes dependent on other resource users in the hiking areas. Although overall activity is not light, there are some areas of congestion and possible overuse, including the Blue Lakes Trail.

Wildlife viewing opportunities are a major advantage for all trail activities. Impacts on wildlife can be minimized with appropriate management, but restrictions in very sensitive areas may necessitate designated trails.

7.8.5.3 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The acquisition of tenure over trail development and use areas would allow operators to maintain some control over the environment and associated viewscapes. Parks and protected areas may have policies that preclude the use of horses, especially in sensitive areas such as alpine environments and riparian zones which are often scenic and are, therefore, desirable destinations for trail riding and hiking.

Infrastructure needs are not that extensive, but it is important to provide access and maintain a quality trail network, especially near the frontcountry where multi-use activities predominate. Trail activities are very reliant on road access to trailheads and trails that lead to wilderness destinations. Trailheads have to be accessible within a short distance from where vehicles must be parked. Circuit routes are preferred over out-and-back trails.

In general, the better the signage, parking, garbage disposal, washrooms, and interpretative facilities the better the trip experience will be for users. This means quality map information and some investment in public facilities. The private sector is rarely solely responsible for development simply because it does not have the necessary access to the land. Communities have an excellent opportunity to enhance their hiking product, especially in the frontcountry, as it can be developed in conjunction with recreation initiatives.

Features such as fishing, lakes, waterfalls, cabins, wildlife viewing opportunities, historical features etc. can enhance the trail experience. Their absence can also detract from the experience and make product development difficult. For backcountry hiking and backpacking that appeals to enthusiasts, alpine and sub-alpine environments are preferred and the built environment becomes less important.

As with the mountaineering and backcountry ski touring products, trail riding and hiking in more remote and high elevation locales could be augmented by hut development, which would allow for multi-day tours, and linkages with higher quality amenities (e.g. accommodation). This product would appeal to the hiking enthusiast market. There is a growing market, especially in the US, for wilderness camping.

Many of the preferred (alpine) destinations for this activity often have a very short snow-free season (late June/early July to late September); thus the commercially viable season is short.

7.8.5.4 OVERALL POTENTIAL

Trail riding and hiking have some good potential in the region because there are some accessible quality resources, some good trail systems and visitor markets that place a high value on hiking activity. Among visitors to Northwest BC hiking/backpacking is the third most important outdoor activity among non-residents. The potential for commercial hiking tours spans a full range of options from multi-day trekking tours to short interpreted tours of the frontcountry.

Many hiking participants become repeat clients, so increasing the opportunity for new experiences should increase the potential for repeat customers. Communities in the study area have a range of hiking product that they can package with cultural, heritage and other nature-oriented activities. Further interpretation of unique features like the lakes and river system and First Nations would significantly enhance the frontcountry hiking product.

While trail development and interpretation is important, building a better trail product in the Kispiox region will also require effective marketing and promotion to attract Highway 16 travellers. The production and distribution of self-guiding aides, including trail books, books, maps and web sites could increase participation levels.

Commercial operators must provide additional value to gain customers, either through a quality experience (not only the hike but interpretation, meals and lodging) and/or adding other desired activities, which the customers cannot do on their own.

MARKET & SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA			
UNITS:		**South Unit**	**North Unit**
Markets	Demand	**Medium** high but stable participation rates, good market depth (long-haul, short-haul, overseas)	
	Competition	**Medium-High** numerous regions with excellent trails, infrastructure and features. Several destination trails provincially	
	Overall potential	**High** numerous trails with a variety of experiences	**Medium** remoteness a barrier
Impact/ Conflict	Use	**Medium** muluple trail users near Hazelton but overall low volumes means few conflicts	
	Community / Social	**Low:** few impacts on resident recreation use	
Business Develop-ment Needs	Crown tenure	**Low-Medium** needed only for repeated camping or trail use. Needs increase if permanent structures (e.g. huts) involved	
	Infrastructure	**High** basic services and amenities required, as well as trail development/upkeep and good signage, convenient access	
	Capital	**Low** camping/cooking gear for overnight use. Animals required for trail riding or llama packing	
Level of community support		**High** conforms to community economic development goals	
Employment opportunities		**Low-Medium** opportunities for guiding and tourism service employment	

MARKET & SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA		
UNITS:	**South Unit**	**North Unit**
Opportunities	• Multi-activity packages with river activities, hiking, nature observation, wildlife viewing (Seven Sisters Park, Old Kuldo Trail, Yukon Telegraph Trail, Rocher Deboule, Hospital Lake, Suskwa-Moricetown traverse, Kispiox Mountain Range, Shelf Ridge) • Partnerships with existing operators ('Ksan, Grizzly Tours, Oldtown Adventures, Gitysan Cultural Heritage B&B) • Guided nature and interpretive hiking tours in the frontcountry, focusing on agri-tourism (mushrooms and hemp).	• Tours of the Yukon Telepgraph Trail. • Linkages with cultural heritage interpretation (villages of Gitangasx and Gitwinhlt'uutsxwhl'aks, Gisgegas, Fort Connelly). • Linkages with wildlife viewing (Kwinageese-Fred Wrigth Lakes for bears) • Multi-activity packages with river activities, fishing and nature observation.

7.8.6 High Opportunity Areas

Name
Kispiox (Hazelton Ridge)
Rocher Deboule
Seven Sisters (north and south)
Skeena West / Fiddler
Blunt Seaton
Thoen
Telegraph trails (Yukon and Collin Overland)
Suskwa Pass / Fort Babine
Atnas
Gisgegas/Shelf Ridge
Skeena/Canyon Lake/Nass

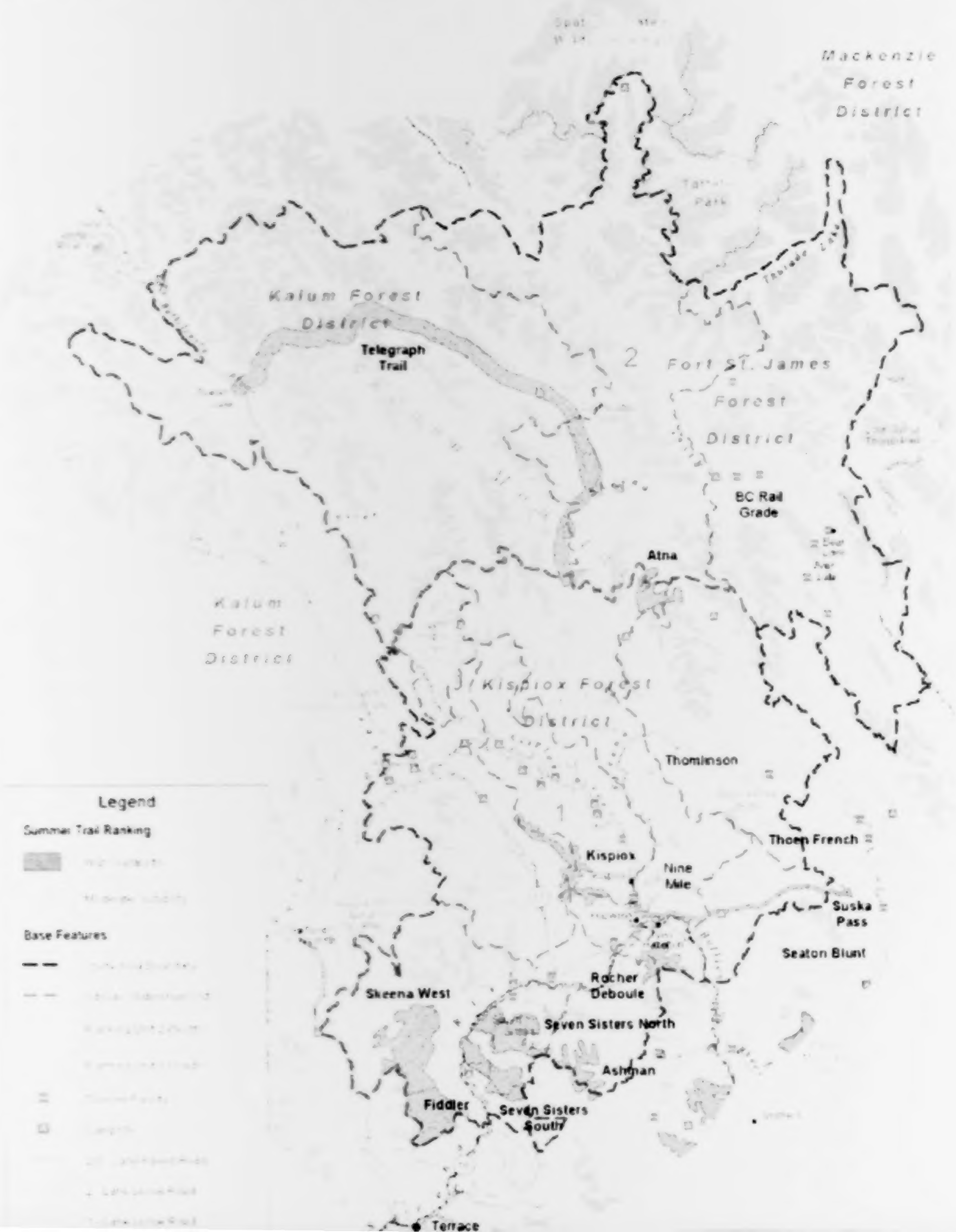
7.8.7 Summer Trail Products Map

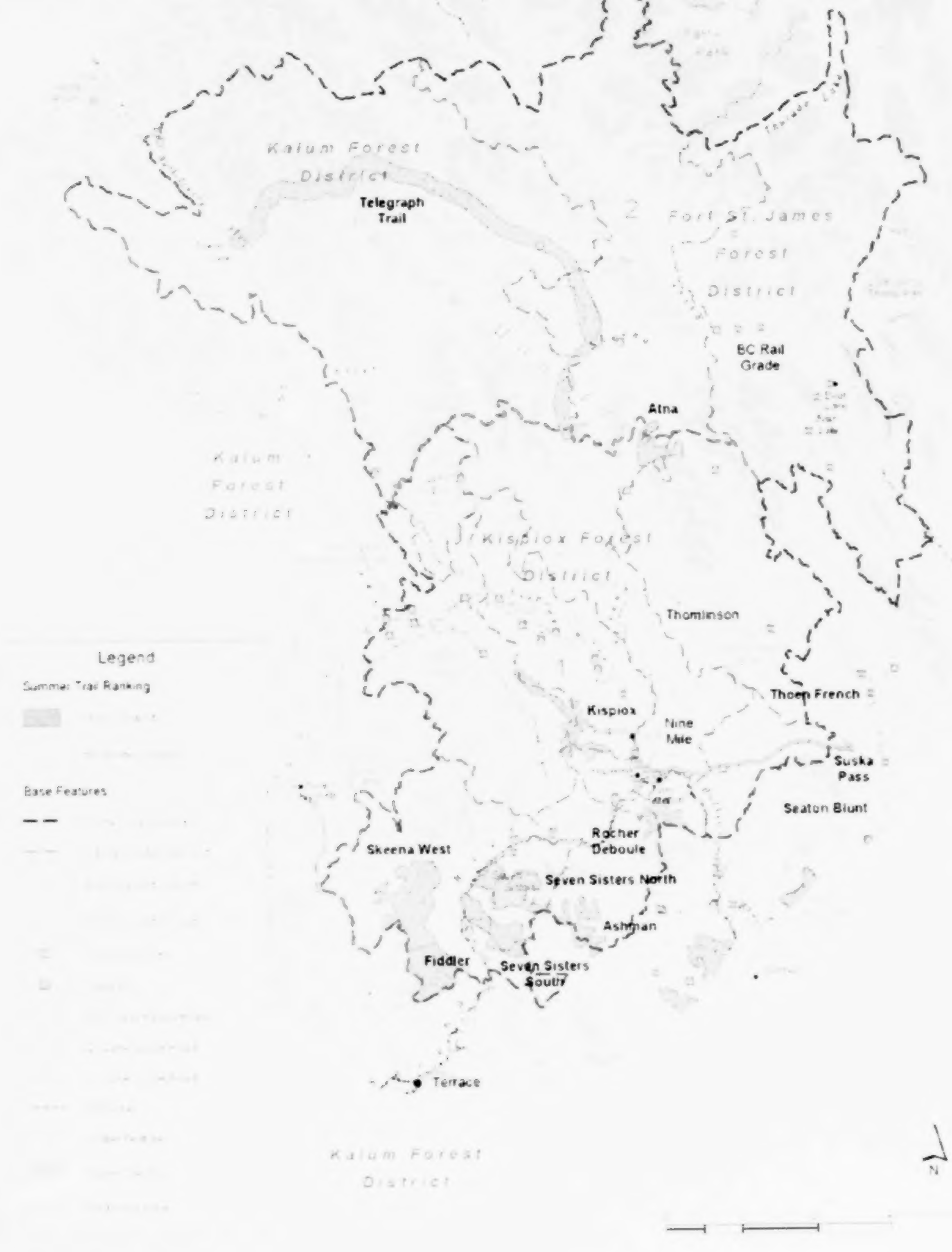
On the following page is the tourism suitability map for the Summer Trail product (Exhibit 27).

Kispiox Tourism Opportunity Study

Summer Trail Suitability

British Columbia


Mackenzie Forest District
Kalum Forest District
Telegraph Trail
2
Fort St. James Forest District
BC Rail Grade
Atna
Kalum Forest District
Kispiox Forest District
Thomlinson
1
Kispiox
Nine Mile
Thoen French
Suska Pass
Seaton Blunt
Rocher Deboule
Skeena West
Seven Sisters North
Ashman
Fiddler
Seven Sisters South
Terrace
Legend
Summer Trail Ranking
Base Features


Kalum Forest District
Telegraph Trail
Fort St. James Forest District
BC Rail Grade
Atna
Kalum Forest District
Kispiox Forest District
Thomlinson
Thoen French
Kispiox
Nine Mile
Suska Pass
Seaton Blunt
Rocher Deboule
Skeena West
Seven Sisters North
Ashman
Fiddler
Seven Sisters South
Terrace
Kalum Forest District
N
Legend
Summer Trail Ranking
Base Features

Chapter 8

8 Tourism Action Plans

The previous chapter focused on opportunities related to product development. This chapter deals with broader tourism and community development issues that have implications for product development. The focus is on correcting weaknesses and gaps that may impede development. Without the basic building blocks of economic development, communities will find it difficult to attract and grow the investment, entrepreneurship, labour and infrastructure needed to create high value tourism.

8.1 Issues Overview

There is a steadily growing global market for adventure and wilderness-related tourism products, and that the Kispiox Forest District / Gitx̲san First Nation has specific features to attract a share of this market. The key development challenges are:

- To develop the local commitment to capitalize on the most promising opportunities.
- To prepare the most promising products for the market.
- To develop quality products that will be competitive regionally and nationally.
- To attract the financing and investment capital required for the development of suitable tourism opportunities.

The consultants have heard from numerous community stakeholders on their goals and objectives for the tourism sector in the Kispiox Forest District / Gitx̲san First Nation. The key community challenges are to:

- Develop adventure products in a manner that protects community values (ie., environmental and recreational) and maximizes community participation in terms of ownership and employment.
- Expands the economic benefits derived from tourism development within the local communities.

8.2 Issues Scan

Several key issues were identified during the course of this project by the consulting team either through research, analysis or direct input from community stakeholders and tourism operators. The project team believes these issues should be addressed in further product development planning if the Kispiox Forest District / Gitx̲san First Nation is to develop its tourism industry in a manner consistent with community and tourism industry needs. The following points have been raised across the region.

1. Communities in the Kispiox Forest District / Gitxsan First Nation have identified tourism as a key future economic activity and each community has been working on specific tourism initiatives over the past several years. The communities are becoming more involved in the processes and activities associated with tourism development. The communities recognize the utility of economic diversification into tourism, and have expressed a desire to have tourism contribute to their local economies.

2. In some communities, local residents, particularly those not directly employed by the tourism industry, must show support towards tourism development. Some residents remain skeptical towards the value of tourism and transmit a negative attitude towards tourists. There is concern about the impact that local tourism will bring to the area. Additional educational efforts may be required to show the positive economic impact of tourism for the region and community discussions must occur to explore solutions to local concerns.

3. Tourism stakeholders have identified the tenure process for operating on Crown Land and the number of different agencies that operators must deal with in conducting their tourism venture as a barrier to effectively moving tourism opportunities forward in a timely and efficient fashion. This has made it difficult for tourism opportunities to undertake the investments they need to fully capitalize on identified tourism opportunities.

4. Representatives in the communities have identified several transportation issues as one of the primary impediments to tourism development locally. One of the key concerns is the need for road upgrading in the region, particularly Highway 37 North and the Kitwanga back road. The lack of trails and signage to several key tourism features has been identified as limiting access for tourists coming to the area.

5. There needs to be better cooperation between local organizations and tourism interests. Ways need to be explored to collaborate over the use and development of specific areas in the region. Currently various groups are in competition when there may be opportunities to accommodate several tourism and recreation objectives in the same area.

6. Throughout the Kispiox Forest District / Gitxsan First Nation there are several tourism products currently being developed or considered by several communities. Effort should be given to ensuring that the communities in the region work collaboratively to develop connected and complementary products to offer the touring public.

7. Some of the products identified in this report will require a significant capital investment. Clearly, attracting this kind of capital will be a challenge. An investor will be seeking the best return on investment and minimal risk exposure. The investment decision will be influenced by factors such as the market for the product, the competition, the security of the land base, the location of the venture, and the entrepreneur's experience in the sector. Community and government support will be necessary to create a favourable investment climate.

8. It appears that in some instances that different organizations involved in tourism have not been able to work in a collaborative fashion to benefit the regional tourism sector. As well, while it has been relayed that tourism is a high priority with the communities in the region, key

personnel do not have enough resources to properly pursue goals and objectives that they would like to undertake in the tourism sector.

8.3 Regional Recommendations

This section deals with broader tourism and community development issues that cut across geographic boundaries and therefore suggest action at the regional level. The major topics addressed include:

- ***Community Development and Planning*** – community economic development functions that broadly impact tourism development.
- ***Business Development*** – services targeted at the private sector which are meant to stimulate new business activity.
- ***Infrastructure*** – basic inputs and services, often provided publicly, that are considered essential for community and economic development.
- ***Human Resources*** – initiatives dealing with human capital, including training and education.

Exhibit 28: Summary of Tourism Development Recommendations

Community Development and Planning	• Implementation • Joint Tourism Planning • Community Positioning & Marketing • Lobbying • Communications • Commercial Recreation Tenure • User Group Agreements • First Nations Tourism Development
Business Development	• Product Packaging • Networking • Web Development • Research & Information • Investment Attraction
Infrastructure	• Signing • Highway Improvements • Trail Development
Human Resources	• Tourism Training and Education • Entrepreneurial Skill Development

8.3.1 Community Development Implementation

Community Development and Planning

→ **Implementation**

Rationale

The recommendations made in this strategy will only yield results if there is some commitment to implementation and this is unlikely to occur with ad hoc efforts. Community-based tourism development is becoming increasingly complex and sophisticated, at a time when it is becoming harder to source funding assistance for priority initiatives. Communities in the Study Area have finite resources and support and cannot reasonably be expected to deal with every issue and event in the community. One solution is to identify and prioritize strategic options, as is being done in this Strategy. Another solution is to leverage all available resources by networking, partnering and working cooperatively with other communities, agencies and the private sector so the region can build some momentum for implementation.

Actions

- Distribute project resources:
- Distribute opportunity information, including activity/product profiles and business planning guide, to local entrepreneurs and other stakeholders.
- Promote map products.
- Meet with tourism and community economic development stakeholders to prioritize key initiatives outlined in this study.
- Develop a one-year action plan focusing on initiatives that could be implemented on a regional basis but which assist with development in all areas.
- Prepare a short-list of financial assistance programs for assisting with implementation.
- Review financial assistance programs
- Prepare a short-list of programs appropriate for outdoor recreation development
- Flag programs which have near-term deadlines for submissions.
- Prepare and circulate a two to three page "Tourism Financing" fact sheet among tourism stakeholders and solicit further ideas for project submissions.

Responsibility	▸ Economic development commissions ▸ Community Futures ▸ Upper Skeena Tourism Association ▸ Chambers of commerce
Potential Partners	▸ MSBTC ▸ NDC

8.3.2 Community Development Joint Tourism Planning

Community Development and Planning	
→	**Joint Tourism Planning**
Rationale	
There are a number of organizations actively engaged in community economic development and tourism development in the study area, but only a limited amount of joint planning takes place, even though there are a host of issues and problems that could be effectively dealt with at a regional level. This is particularly true of outdoor adventure tourism and ecotourism, where activity is dispersed over the regional land base, and where there tends to be a lot of shared infrastructure and market issues.	
Actions	
▸ Form a study area action committee of chambers and economic development commission representatives for collaborating on ecotourism development issues. ▸ Compare and share tourism strategy information and identify areas for collaboration, especially where issues are regional in nature, such as transportation, infrastructure and highway signage. ▸ Pursue funding sources within Crown corporations and utility company grant and foundation programs (BC Hydro, BC Tel, ICBC). ▸ Establish an annual tourism symposium in partnership with Northwest communities for the purposes of joint planning, opportunity development and networking. Begin with a value and visioning process so ecotourism planning is given a proper community perspective in the region. ▸ Consider compiling value and vision statements and recommendations from previous community planning exercises for land use decisions or other aspects of community development, including growth management. From these, identify common themes and development consideration that relate to how tourism development affects the local community and region. ▸ Neighbourhood, community and regional levels of interest can be addressed to identify common themes and issues. ▸ Assess tourism development impacts in other communities, prepare case studies and distribute them to stimulate local discussions about desired tourism impacts, values and visions. ▸ Develop a community consultation methodology (e.g. interviews, workshops, community forums) to express clear vision statements.	
Responsibility	▸ Economic development commissions ▸ Upper Skeena Tourism Association ▸ Chambers of commerce ▸ Highway 37 / 37A Tourism Council
Potential Partners	▸ MSBTC ▸ NDC

8.3.3 Community Development Community Positioning & Marketing

Community Development and Planning

→ **Community Positioning & Marketing**

Rationale

A community development tool that is often overlooked is marketing - how well you sell your community to outsiders. Most communities don't have marketing staffs or consultants, though most have promotional brochures or videos, run ads in area development publications, or have home pages on the Internet. But how well a community is marketed is extremely important. Yet most communities do not devote half the effort to selling themselves as their local factory does to marketing its output.

This is important because even though communities aren't businesses, they do have customers -- and competitors. That means that, just like businesses, they can benefit from marketing. Marketing can aid community development in a number of ways including attracting tourists. Key considerations in any community marketing program include:

Marketing Is Selling – It's not enough to have a brochure, video or home page that simply describes the community. Information is not enough. Selling is required.

Find Something to Sell - Never assume you do not have anything about your community you can sell. Sometimes, even perceived liabilities can be turned into assets.

Set the Community Apart – In marketing, the community must be set apart from the competition. Many community marketing efforts like brochures and videos are too similar. The community does not always have to be overwhelmingly superior to other communities. It can be enough to be 10 percent better in some important area. And sometimes it is possible to highlight things even where they are not really different. Mention could be made about advantages that other places also have but usually fail to disclose. Communities that differentiate themselves in the minds of their customers can be successful.

Monitor Results and Test – Communities might be generally pleased with their marketing efforts, but do they know which parts are really producing and which they might well do without? Often, 80 percent of the results are coming for 20 percent of the marketing. To prepare successful marketing packages measure the results of current efforts. Then try something new and see if it works better. The fringe benefit of monitoring and testing is that it can save money. The biggest ads and fanciest brochures or videos are not always the most effective.

Use Data Selectively - Economic and demographic data on the community can be extremely potent if it is mined for items of value.

Actions

- Conduct a marketing audit.
- Identify key partners to provide assistance and resources in building a plan.
- Evaluate the community, including an inventory of the area's best tourism assets, an action plan for their development based on specific job and income potential, an inventory of basic weaknesses, and a plan to reduce or eliminate them.
- Assess preparedness factors of the community (e.g. appearance, community facilities, education and training systems, access to financing, access to Crown land, infrastructure and utilities/services).
- Focus on identifying what is unique about communities in the Study area.
- Establish a common marketing image that could be branded for use in all forms of advertising and promotion.
- Develop community marketing positions or themes around ecotourism products and distinctive features.
- Schedule annual visitor surveys to generate reliable travel market data for local use.
- Current InfoNetwork data is highly biased and there has been no scientifically reliable visitor exit survey in the region for about 10 years. Communities should be generating more visitor information for assisting with planning and development. While there are many assumptions made about current visitor markets, volumes and behaviour, the fact is that very little is known about who comes to the region and for what reason.
- Prepare a schedule for a summer survey that covers as many communities as possible to ensure comparative data is available.
- Acquire off-the-shelf survey software (e.g. Survey-It).
- Prepare survey instrument.
- Staff could be hired through one of the many summer student hire programs.
- Coordinate this project with area high schools.

Responsibility	▸ Economic development commissions ▸ Upper Skeena Tourism Association ▸ Chambers of commerce

Partners	▸ Municipalities ▸ Regional District ▸ Community Futures ▸ Canadian Tourism Commission

8.3.4 Community Development   Lobbying

Community Development and Planning

→ Lobbying

Rationale

Several issues that came up during the community consultation process closely affect tourism development in the study area, yet there is very little individual communities can do to change the situation. These include:

- DFO sport fishery regulations and management; and
- Air fares and schedules

The problem for individual communities is that dealing with senior government agencies or Crown Corporations on these matters can be intimidating and ultimately ineffective. There is no magic solution to these important issues but a coordinated lobbying campaign at the regional level. The Northwest Transportation Corridor Task Force is an example of what cooperative local efforts can lead to if properly conducted. A similar effort is required of the tourism industry in the Study Area if decision-makers are to take seriously the concerns of local stakeholders.

Actions

- Prepare a position statement on the regulation of the sport fishery in the region, outlining the negative press and impacts that result from changes are made without adequate notice to tourism operators.
- Consider undertaking economic impact analyses or case studies, and distribute these to government agencies and political representatives, to draw attention to the impacts these issues have on tourism activity and community development.
- Develop partnerships with sport groups and organizations who share similar interests to develop shared strategies for communicating with senior governments and major industry.
- Initiative a communications campaign with WestJet promoting Smithers Airport for new commercial service.

Responsibility	▸ Economic development agencies ▸ Operators ▸ Tourism associations ▸ Chambers of commerce
Potential Partners	▸ Human Resources Development Canada. ▸ Ministry of Community Development – Enterprise Program, Community and Cooperative Business Development sub-program. ▸ NDC

8.3.5 Community Development   Communications

Community Development and Planning

→ Communications

Rationale

Communications are an extremely important function for those organizations involved with advancing tourism in the study Area, particularly in light of the fact that the industry is still considered incidental to the region's economic base and given little consideration as a serious economic contender by many residents, elected representatives and decision-makers. Strategically building awareness and understanding of tourism and its benefits throughout the region should be a priority along with specific project developments and initiatives During the community consultation process for this project, workshop participants stated the following:

- The public had a poor awareness of tourism and its benefits/potential for communities.
- Elected officials did not consider tourism a contributor to the region's economic base.
- The region's youth were not aware of tourism job and career potential.
- Businesses and entrepreneurs were not aware of opportunities for tourism development.

These statements hint at an apathetic attitude, or worse an underlying resistance, toward tourism development that will make it difficult to generate the economic benefits the region is capable of. Historically, tourism in the study area has been based on the sport fishery and highway touring, neither of which required sophisticated marketing. With the virtual collapse of sport fishing and travellers demanding more in terms of a tourism experience, the industry will now have to work much harder to build a competitive product and attract markets with an ever-increasing choice of destination. Communities, which have a flexible and well, trained workforce, competitive operators, strong industry linkages, good infrastructure and broad community support for tourism will come out ahead. Before these essential building blocks are in place in the study area, there will have to be consistent and well planned communications to overcome apathy and pave the way for developing a tourism culture that will be critical for future success.

Actions

- Prepare a communications plan outlining procedures for promoting positive tourism-related events in the community, and outside the community. This would include developing a database of key media contacts and refining criteria for deciding upon what makes a newsworthy event.
- Ensure political representatives are targeted in the communications program.
- Identify opportunities to have major industry collaborate with tourism businesses on tourism projects and promote these projects to communities as a way of overcoming popular misconceptions that development in tourism usually means economic loss for some other industry (i.e. that economic development is somehow a zero sum game).
- Prepare an annual report card on the progress of tourism development in the region, identifying and tracking project developments and communicating these to media contacts and stakeholders.
- Prepare a newspaper tourism column with collaboration by EDOs and chambers.
- Investigate a *tourist in your own town* program. These programs are very popular in the US and Canada and involve giving residents an opportunity to sample attractions, tours and restaurants at reduced prices.
- One option is to create and sell a passport with money-saving coupons from attractions, lodging and dining establishments. Tourism businesses can be asked to provide incentives such as percentage discounts, 2-for-1 offers or value-added gift items. In return, participating businesses benefit from increased traffic and visibility through the passports. Usage restrictions are usually permitted by season and by day.

Responsibility	▸ Economic development agencies ▸ Operators ▸ Tourism associations ▸ Chambers of commerce
Potential Partners	▸ Human Resources Development Canada ▸ Ministry of Community Development – Enterprise Program, Community and Co-operative Business Development sub-program

8.3.6 Community Development Commercial Recreation Tenure

Community Development and Planning

→ **Commercial Recreation Tenure**

Rationale:

Commercial recreation tenure has the potential for significantly shaping the future of tourism in the Study Area over the long-term because it will confer certain rights of access and use of the land base to licensees. For this reason, communities should be acting now to ensure their concerns and interests are being met.

The issuance of CR tenures may not be a process to which the public currently attaches much importance, perhaps understandably if they also consider tourism to be a minor economic player in the region. But there may be considerable risk in assuming that decisions being made now in granting tenures may not have increasingly important implications, both economic and social, down the road. Even though all Crown tenures have terms and conditions attached, once they are issued, they are unlikely to be revoked and they will carry considerable value assuming that the resource use they confer will come under increasing demand. In forestry, Crown tenures such as TFLs and forest licences are the very basis of industry supply. This may be true of commercial outdoor recreation in the years ahead and communities in the Study Area should be ensuring that local community economic development considerations and criteria are built into the permitting process. It is not inconceivably that the most valuable tenures in the region may go to operators or businesses outside the region and thereby limit the local impacts that could be generated by the region's tourism resources.

Actions

- Monitor use of existing tenures to determine whether there is under-utilization and thus potential for additional commercial activity through re-issuance.
- Lobby BCALC to ensure that community needs are factored into the approval process for commercial recreation tenure.
- Rather than adhering to strict economic efficiency criteria when assessing applications for commercial tenure, BCALC should be encouraged to adopt Ministry of Forests Small Business Forest Enterprise Program (SBFEP) assessment guidelines. For Section 21 value-added timber sales, bidders are given higher scores if they will process the timber in the local community. A similar approach for commercial recreation tenure would ensure that prospective operators carefully consider doing more business in communities nearby the operating area.

Responsibility	▸ Municipalities ▸ Regional District ▸ Economic development agencies
Potential Partners	▸ BCALC ▸ MoF ▸ MELP

8.3.7 Community Development User Group Agreements

Community Development and Planning

→ User Group Agreements

Rationale:

Many people use Crown land for recreation. As that use and the variety of different users increases, conflicts are bound to arise. In the study area, there are several areas where resource use conflicts have flared up in the past, threatening relations between commercial operations and public recreation. Overcrowding of prime river fishing spots and disputes between motorized and non-motorized winter recreation users in the alpine around Terrace were two examples brought forth during the community consultation process. Community Recreation (CR) policy and planning by BCAL will gradually be refined and streamlined to provide a basic support for commercial recreation in the Northwest, but it is unlikely to be a panacea for all disputes that arise between commercial operators, and it certainly will not provide solutions for disputes between operators and other resource users. User-group agreements have emerged in other jurisdictions as a valuable and complementary tool to CR planning and should be actively encouraged in the study area before disputes become too polarized and entrenched. Locally produced agreements can often prove effective mechanisms for dispute resolution because they are able to account for local values and interests without the perception that decisions are being made outside the community.

Actions

- Consider producing a recreation use code of ethics to assist commercial recreation operators self-manage conflicting use. A less formal education brochure could also be prepared by chambers of commerce and distributed to local recreationists and visitors.
- Identify areas where there may be concerns about Carrying Capacity or Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC).

Responsibility	▸ Municipalities ▸ Regional District ▸ Economic development commissions
Potential Partners	▸ BCALC ▸ MoF ▸ MELP

8.3.8 Community Development First Nations Tourism Development

Community Development and Planning

→ **First Nations Tourism Development**

Rationale:

While the overall tourism industry is growing by approximately 3 percent to 5 percent every year, resource-based tourism or ecotourism may be growing by as much as 15 percent to 25 percent. First Nations tourism, where aboriginal people are directly involved through control or having their culture serve as the primary attraction, is an important component of these high growth rates in resource-based tourism. But without a sense of the unique challenges and opportunities that exist within First Nations' communities, successful tourism development will be elusive, if not impossible. Specifically, the need for community control of tourism development and the necessity for outsiders to create effective relationships with the community are crucial. This mandate has been given legal force with the settlement of the Nisga'a treaty, but it is equally important for all First Nations in the Study Area.

With cooperative community support and control, tourism has the potential to stimulate economic and social development and provide a mechanism for re-establishing aboriginal approaches to land use and resource management. More activity along these lines will help rebuild capacity within First Nations communities, affirm cultural values and traditions, empower and strengthen community pride, create employment, generate revenue, provide training and educational opportunities and facilitate cultural exchange. In other words, tourism development can lead to overall community development.

There is an opportunity in the study area for achieving First Nations tourism development through the creation of partnerships, networking and relationships that will bring together all available regional assets into a single development path.

Actions

- Conduct an aboriginal tourism development conference in the Hazeltons.
- Ensure linkages are made with major aboriginal tourism organizations, including the Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia, and the Canadian National Aboriginal Tourism Association, and Aboriginal Tourism Team Canada (part of the Canadian Tourism Commission).
- Investigate uses for programs currently offered to meet assist First Nations tourism development, including the BC government's Visions for the Future, a series of career development conferences for aboriginal youth, and the Royal BC Museum's Aboriginal Cultural Stewardship Program for aboriginal youth interested in working in native culture interpretation.
- Promote joint ventures between experienced tour operators and First Nations

Responsibility	▸ First Nations ▸ Economic development agencies ▸ Community Futures
Potential Partners	▸ Northwest Community College ▸ Aboriginal Business Canada ▸ NDC ▸ MCDVC

8.3.9 Business Development Product Packaging

Business Development	
↳	Product Packaging
Rationale	

Tourists do not always want just the product or experience that an individual operator offers. Increasingly, they are demanding a variety of experiences, as many built-in services as possible, and a choice of trip attributes such as length of stay, accommodation options and degree of risk/challenge. This is placing more pressure on operators to be flexible and adaptive to market demands at a time when many are reluctant or unable to meet the challenge and be competitive. Outdoor tourism operators tend to be small businesses, which directly sell to travellers often without marketing intermediaries or in cooperation with other operators. They therefore may be missing an excellent opportunity to broaden their appeal and increase business through the provision of more diversified and customized tourism products. The way to do this, of course, is through packaging.

Packaging can be conducted with other complementary operators or even with similar operators. During community consultations many suggestions were made for packaging new and innovative products/experiences (e.g. family-oriented activities, museum/historical/cultural tours, "wellness" products) with the more conventional outdoor products like fishing.

Actions
▸ Seek professional technical assistance for entrepreneurs from the Province, to continue the process of building tourism packages particularly for small groups utilizing local transportation, accommodation, meals, and tour guides. ▸ Identify a short-haul market (e.g. Vancouver or Edmonton) for package promotion on a pilot basis. ▸ Prepare and market product packages for the regional market (e.g. Prince George). ▸ Identify products/activities with the greatest appeal for the regional market. ▸ Identify trade shows and fairs in Prince George where packages could be inexpensively marketed. ▸ Encourage operators to increase exposure through regional tourism conferences. ▸ Host a tourism workshop on packaging. ▸ Identify a product package for promotion among interested operators, detailing composition and pricing. Ensure that: ▸ Demand-generators (e.g. highly appealing experiences and activities) are included, rather than simplified product statements. ▸ all necessary services are included. ▸ Compatibility between package components. ▸ Pricing is competitive, but profit is assured. ▸ Ensure packages are included in Tourism BC's travel agents' manual of tour packages. ▸ Ensure packages meet the provinces guidelines for financial assistance (see following table). ▸ Host multi-day familiarization (FAM) trips with a select group of Vancouver, Alberta and Washington-based tour operators and travel trade representatives. ▸ Increase distribution of packages through visitor centres. ▸ Encourage the establishment of additional inbound tour operators, focusing on increasing penetration of highway travellers for adventure product sales. ▸ Use the FFTOS inventory of operators to assist with assessing packaging opportunities and for helping operators get in touch with one another. ▸ Research mailing lists for tour operators in North America and long-haul markets who can be targeted for products available in the region. ▸ Consider marketing in a cooperative marketing group. ▸ Marketing was identified as a business skill gap by many of the survey respondents, and companies such as Fresh Tracks, an inbound soft adventure tour operator with 55 adventures in BC, Yukon and Alaska, have shown that collective packaging and marketing can be profitable. Fresh Tracks is a marketing organization which obtains the clients and then contracts to 28 outfitters and guides for the on-the-ground trip experience. ▸ Prepare a product guide for the Kispiox area that would list tourism services, an events calendar, accommodation guide, adventure and recreation operators, attractions and transportation services. ▸ Identify who is currently providing packages within the region. ▸ Share the product guide with all operators. ▸ Work with NBCTA to take full advantage of Canadian Tourism Commission marketing and packaging programs. Several of CTC's programs could be utilized locally, but only once a consortia of interested stakeholders was formed. Programs such as the Regional Tourism Marketing Initiative program[50] and the Adventure program[51] could be the impetus needed to generate more packaging locally.

Responsibility	▸ Upper Skeena Tourism Association ▸ Chambers of commerce
Potential Partners	▸ NBCTA (Northern British Columbia Tourism Association) ▸ Human Resources Development Canada ▸ Canada-BC Service Centre – PEMD-I Program ▸ Ministry of Community Development – Enterprise Program, Community and Co-operative Business Development sub-program.

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[50] http://www.canadatourism.com/en/ctc/partner_centre/partnering/can/tablecont.html

[51] http://www.canadatourism.com/en/ctc/partner_centre/partnering/can/tablecont.html

The following criteria are used by Tourism British Columbia when determining if a supplier is ready to work with Tourism BC in offering "export ready" product to international markets:

Suppliers Must:

- Be in business at least one year, with a proven track record for safe and professional operation.
- Demonstrate an adequate budget and marketing plan that includes international tour operators.
- Understand the roles played by receptive tour operators (RTO's), tour operators/travel wholesalers, and retail travel agents. This includes an understanding of rack or retail pricing, agent commissions and wholesale net rates and client relationships at each level.
- Be willing to include receptive tour operators in your marketing and sales plan, and implement a regular sales call program directed toward these operators.
- Be willing to provide contracted wholesale net rates to receptive tour operators. As a general guideline, requirements are: 15% off the retail price for day activities and transportation and 20-30% off retail pricing for accommodations (higher discounts are common for volume production).
- Honour the contracted net rates, no price changes before the expiry of the contracted agreement.
- Provide detailed pricing and program information to tour operators and receptive operators at least one year in advance of selling season, i.e. May 1999 for the summer/fall 2000 season.
- Be prepared to communicate and accept reservations by telephone, fax and/or e-mail. Provide same-day confirmation of booking arrangements.
- Set up billing arrangements with the operator, agency or receptive tour operator. Accept client vouchers as confirmation of payment for reservations.
- Determine business priorities in terms of group or FIT business. If you plan to pursue group business, consider access by tour buses, parking/turnaround areas, washroom facilities etc. Determine your maximum group size.
- Carry adequate insurance (minimum $3 million liability insurance for adventure product suppliers is recommended). Discuss this with your receptive operator (sometimes they can add suppliers to their existing policies at nominal cost).
- Provide support (free or reduced rates) for international media and travel trade familiarization tours.

→ In addition to the above, the following should be considered "next steps" for consideration as business and market presence expands:

- Consider attending travel trade shows involving international buyers, either in North America or overseas.
- Expand the sales call program to include overseas contacts as well as Canada-based receptive operators.
- Be prepared to provide tour operators and media with 35mm slide, CD ROM or standard computer format images of the product or operation, for use in brochures, promotions and editorials.
- Consider producing video footage of product or operation for promotional and training purposes.
- Consider development of a website offering information on your product.
- Be prepared to adapt to uniqueness of certain overseas markets. Flexibility may be required with regard to last minute bookings and changes.
- Consider hiring frontline staff that speak the language of the markets you are interested in pursuing.

8.3.10 Business Development Networking

Business Development

→ **Networking**

Rationale

Some of the comments received from industry contacts made during this project revealed that some operators, and communities, felt "unconnected" and uninformed because there was no business network through which they could make referrals or share information. Building business networks and linkages can generate significant economic development opportunities as well as cost savings for businesses. Other strategies in this report such as packaging imply some form of operator network – the more vigorous the network, the more likely the industry will attain competitiveness and generate positive economic benefits for the community. Better workforce training linkages, the establishment of mutual infrastructure (e.g. trail systems), the development of a local supplier network, and cooperative marketing are some of the achievements possible through network development. The sharing of strategic planning information, from outlining key business objectives to explaining the obstacles in building critical social and economic ties to the community can benefit all communities in the Study Area, especially First Nations' communities where business capacity is currently limited.

Actions

- Work with all communities in the region to prepare a regional tourism database (e.g. Product Guide).
- Accommodation facilities, adventure operators, attractions and transportation companies could all be listed in a single, relational database, using the FFTOS results as a baseline.
- Devise a method for maintaining the database on an annual basis.
- Distribute the Product Guide to all operators as a resource for encouraging more networking and packaging.
- Prepare an email list of local operators, community and government contacts which can be targeted for receiving press releases and other communications (i.e. listserve[52]). Best practices in ecotourism business development could also be promoted.
- Share information on common issues such as signage, land use, CR tenuring and infrastructure.
- Investigate the feasibility of forming a "Product Club" in the Kispiox area.
- The Product Club program[53] is administered by the Canadian Tourism Commission for the purpose of encouraging tourism consortia to develop market-ready products. A consortium of small and medium-sized businesses that agree to work together in order to develop new tourism products or enhance existing products which will collectively address issues that are impeding the growth of tourism in a given area or industry sector. A typical Product Club is an independent entity, which could include outfitters, tour operators or tourism associations. Research (on markets, on products, on initiatives in other jurisdictions), workshops/seminars for club members, developing a product development plan, developing a sales strategy, communication tools (e.g. newsletters, meetings) are examples of supported ventures.
- A meeting could be held with outdoor tourism stakeholders to gauge the level of interest in forming a product club. An example in BC are the 75 Canadian members of the consortium Trail of the Great Bear, made up of operators in the food and beverage, transportation, accommodation and soft adventure industry, which promote touring, eco-tourism and cultural/heritage products within the Trail of the Great Bear region (Rockies area of Alberta and British Columbia). The Product Club will create year-round barrier-free touring packages through an enhanced communication strategy, research to identify market potential, and a model that can be used in other regions.
- A proposal call for Product Club submissions will be issued in Autumn 2000.

Responsibility	▸ Upper Skeena Tourism Association ▸ Chambers of commerce
Potential Partners	▸ Canadian Tourism Commission — Product Club Program ▸ NBCTA

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[52] Listserves come in two forms, Discussion Lists and Announce Lists. An Announce List is used to quickly distribute important information to all subscribed members.

[53] http://www.canadatourism.com/en/ctc/partner_centre/shortcutindex.cfm?info=productclubs/productindex.html, (613) 946-1000.

8.3.11 Business Development Web Development

Business Development	
→	Web Development
Rationale	
Currently, the Internet is not a major factor either for the markets travelling to the region or for the operators who are providing products and services. However, feedback from successful operators suggests that Internet use can be very effective in terms of generating interest, controlling operating costs and expanding marketing reach, especially when dealing with international visitors. Companies such like Fresh Tracks generate more than half of all their sales through their web site. While some tourism operators have developed sophisticated web sites and email systems, many more in the Kispiox Study Area could benefit by having a stronger Internet presence. Communities can work with operators on Internet development by identifying resources and assistance for web site development, encouraging best practices in design and operation, providing digital information about the area and its resources that could complement product-specific marketing and by encouraging local indexing and linking of sites (especially to high volume sites).	
Actions	
▸ Evaluate web-site effectiveness. ▸ Use the University of Illinois' "Thumbs Up – Evaluating Community Websites" tool for reviewing best practices in web site design.[54] ▸ Solicit examples of guided tours and packages that could be featured as a main tourism page on the regional websites. ▸ Maintain a tourism links page to important tourism websites as a reference for local tourism stakeholders. The Canadian Tourism Commission[55] and the SFU Centre for Tourism Policy and Research[56] have excellent links' pages. ▸ Undertake steps for gathering more information and data-mining from website visitors. ▸ Identify target Internet sites for co-marketing or placement of creative banner ads to link regional websites.	
Responsibility	▸ Chambers of commerce ▸ Upper Skeena Tourism Association ▸ Community networks
Potential Partners	▸ NWCC (student assistance for project design and implementation) ▸ Community Access Program (CAP)

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[54] http://www.ag.uiuc.edu/~lced/commtele/thumbsup.html

[55] http://www.canadatourism.com/index_ct.html

[56] http://www.rem.sfu.ca/tourism/

8.3.12 Business Development Research and Information

Business Development

→ **Research and Information**

Rationale

The advent of the Internet has made the concept that knowledge is power truer than ever. The Internet has become a medium for idea generation, industry intelligence, professional and career assistance, communications, and strategic real-time marketing of communities and businesses to the outside world. The economic development commissions in the study area are having to wear the hat of information broker to remain effective. More and better access to information and communication tools provides tourism operators with the strategic day-to-day data and knowledge to set priorities and agendas, and to improve their competitiveness. A first step is to provide access to information resources, such as important trends and developments, which was identified as a need by survey respondents. This would cover primarily links to government sites, statistical sources and research facilities which make available information on tourism issues. A second area of action is in community tourism planning. Unlike other resources sectors, tourism is dominated by small business – the development of backcountry recreation will depend in large part on the extent to which communities can help local operators create mutually beneficial relationships with each other and with those businesses that collectively provide the tourism experience.

Actions

- Economic development agencies should ensure that they undertake market research on backcountry products, markets and trends, using the web site as the main venue for communication.
- Broker access to PRIT resources by individual operators in need of assistance.
- Consider establish an ecotourism resource library in the Kispiox.
- Develop a one-time project proposal, with costing, for creating an instant library locally. Project sponsors could then be solicited for funding. The project should be of interest because it would have a well-defined outcome and generate immediate benefits as a resource centre for tourism stakeholders.
- Promote the existence of MoF recreation maps to visitor markets to increase awareness of the full range of possible outdoor activities.
- Prepare a "Good Practices" manual for distribution to new operators, particularly those from outside the community. The manual would outline the benefits to the community and the operator or good practice fundamentals and encourage operators to hire and buy locally.
- Produce and distribute a tourism business planning guide for local entrepreneurs.
- Ask banks to assist with outlining financial planning requirements for operators.

Responsibility	▸ Economic development agencies ▸ Community Futures
Potential Partners	▸ Human Resources Development Canada. ▸ Ministry of Community Development – Enterprise Program, Community and Co-operative Business Development sub-program.

8.3.13 Business Development Investment Attraction

Business Development

Investment Attraction

Rationale:

Community economic development practitioners often offer site selection services to encourage businesses and entrepreneurs to relocate in the community. This is one of the many tools used to attract new businesses into the region, and to retain existing businesses that might want to expand or relocate to some other location. The problem with resource-based tourism development is that getting access to the appropriate information and packaging that information in a convenient format has been a difficult, if not impossible, task. Now that MSBTC and BCAL have compiled map-based information about outdoor product capabilities in the study area, there is an information tool that EDOs can use to encourage new activity and guide their attraction efforts for tourism development. There are many advantages to identifying and packaging site information. First, the community has a way to get involved in Crown land use and disposition rather than leaving all decisions up to provincial decision-makers. Second, the community can be proactive in identifying where the preferred sites are and planning around them. And third, it gives the community a marketing and business development tool.

Actions

- Encourage the completion of a tourism development site guide.
- Local economic development agencies could prepare a site guide for tourism development in conjunction with BCALC.
- The idea of actively identifying and promoting sites with favourable development prospects makes sense in terms of land use and investment attraction. For agencies such as BCALC, such a product is valuable because it has a chance to review and pre-approve sites that may be targeted in applications for Crown land tenure and sale. For communities and regional districts, the guide could be featured in their marketing and attraction programs, as well as assist with the forecasting and planning for future infrastructure and services.
- The initial focus could be on remote fishing lodges, or alpine huts/lodges with high quality resources, no use pressures and high probability for tenure.
- Seek the cooperation of BCALC and the MoF on a cooperative, inter-agency approach to the marketing of tourism tenures.
- Prepare a handbook for helping tourism developers negotiate the land use process in establishing their businesses.
- An investor's guide could be refined to target tourism projects. A flow chart format which detailed the process an investor would have to follow in obtaining the requisite land and tenures would be invaluable. While a single flow chart that tries to track the steps for all development possibilities might prove to be a bit too complicated for presentation, there may be an opportunity to prepare a flow chart that outlines the basic steps and to append to this case studies providing more detail for specific projects and products.

Responsibility	Economic development agencies Community Futures
Potential Partners	BCALC MoF NDC MCDVC MSBTC

8.3.14 Infrastructure Signage and Gateways

Infrastructure	
→	Signage and Gateways
Rationale:	
The BC government, through the Service and Attraction Signage Program, administers standardized directional signage for tourism-related services and facilities throughout the province. The system is based on a classification of highways and sets out sign policies by type of business for each class of highway. Unfortunately, existing policies have managed to produce a very utilitarian inventory of tourism signage that lacks the marketing savvy and power which operators needs to draw more visitors off the highways and into their facilities and into local communities. While influencing provincial highway sign policy may not be a realistic objective in the short-term, there are other avenues of action a community can take to improve tourism signage, including working with the MoTH for special theme signing and improvements to regional and local government signage policy. A well-coordinated signage program can generate many benefits for the community by improving access to essential services and facilities, promoting visits to operators and their attractions and by enhancing the overall profile of tourism in the region.	
Actions	
▸ Develop a Kispiox-Kalum route connecting the Kispiox Valley to Highway 37 north. ▸ Establish a partnership of interested organizations, including Upper Skeena Tourism Association, chambers of commerce and economic development commissions. ▸ Develop a route name. ▸ Develop a theme and design concept for presentation to MoTH. The idea would be to prepare new signage for key turnoffs and to direct visitors through a Kispiox Valley – Highway 37 corridor. An agreement could be struck whereby communities could contribute funds for concept design, while MoTH would prepare and erect the signs. ▸ Prepare a regional Signage Design Manual in conjunction with the regional district and municipalities. Consideration should be given to four types of signs: community, advanced warning, trail and facilities. ▸ Develop a set of consistent themes that will appear on signs, for example to feature different product opportunities such as wildlife viewing, access points to recreational features	
Responsibility	▸ Municipalities and regional district ▸ Chambers of commerce ▸ Economic development agencies
Potential Partners	▸ MoTH ▸ NDC

8.3.15 Infrastructure Highway & Road Improvements

Infrastructure

→ Highway Improvements

Rationale:

The road and highway system is as critical an infrastructure component for tourism as it is for the other economic sectors in the Study Area. But there are numerous situations where the road infrastructure fails to meet acceptable provincial standards, compromising safety and impeding further economic and community development. This exacts a financial cost on individuals and businesses and an economic cost on communities. In the case of tourism, it can have a major impact on project feasibility.

- In areas such as the Kispiox Valley road infrastructure is a fundamental building block for tourism. Without minimum standards of safe operation and speed, it will be difficult to entice highway travellers into the Valley and, importantly, develop circle tours. Improvements to the Kispiox Connector was also mentioned as issues in the Kispiox.

Government spending patterns for rural infrastructure are often unpredictable so the prospects of highway improvements in the near future are unknown. Nevertheless, there is no reason why a coordinated attempt at identifying road/highway priorities from a tourism perspective should not be undertaken, and used to lobby provincial authorities.

Actions

- Establish a rural highways and roads taskforce to investigate development priorities in the region and determine road budget priorities.
- The purpose of the task force would be to create some continuity of dialogue with the province, Crown corporations and the local MLA and develop some long-term planning goals as well as short-term budget priorities.
- For the Kispiox Connector and other possible circle routes, prepare a marketing/transportation strategy to support longer-term investment.
- Prepare a brief outlining the major economic activities on the road and how provincial government revenues are benefiting from local resource activities. The brief could be supplemented with the following data, if pertinent:
- Document accident rates and insurance claims to determine if there are safety issues involved.
- Estimate economic and community developments that could be held up as the result of poor road quality.
- Obtain testimonials on road conditions.

Responsibility	Municipalities and Regional District Chambers of commerce Economic development agencies
Potential Partners	MoTH NDC

8.3.16 Infrastructure Trail Development

Infrastructure

↳ **Trail Development**

Rationale:

Trails are essential for providing public access for a wide variety of outdoor activities from sightseeing and wildlife viewing to mountain climbing and mountain biking. Walking and hiking in the natural environment is expected to be one of the fastest growing segments of outdoor recreation over the next 20 years. Trails provide visitors with first-hand opportunities to understand, appreciate and enjoy key scenic and natural resources, themes and values. It is for these reasons that organizations like Parks Canada have placed a priority on creating a high standard of presentation and access to recreational opportunities through trails. Unfortunately, there are very few developed trail networks in the Study Area, despite there being some excellent potential for linking together high quality features in a natural setting. And the options for trail building and maintenance are fewer now than they were in the recent past years when Forest Renewal BC was extensively involved in funding recreation projects. That funding has almost dried up and both community groups, as well as MoF recreation programs, will suffer as a result. This will place more pressure on regions to come up with local solutions for building and maintaining their trail systems.

Actions

- Assemble research on best practices of trail development. There are numerous resources available both in hard copy form (e.g. Pacific Rim Institute of Tourism) and on the Internet.
- Review Parks Canada's best practices examples for trail development. Although the focus is on in-park development, most of the assessment tools and planning guidelines are applicable to any trail system.
- Undertake a community recreation plan dedicated to trail system development, with particular attention to the following issues:
- Identify and develop an integrated multi-use trail system for land-based and winter-based products.
- Propose solutions for separating uses into specific zones. Dedicated mountain biking trails in close proximity to the Hazeltons might be a first step.
- Lobby the MoF for increases in the recreation budget to be targeted at trail maintenance. While this would only address MoF's trail inventory, there would at least be some effort to maintain the trail system.
- Research should be conducted into implementing a user-pay system for furnishing the resources needed for ongoing trail maintenance, as the BC Snowmobile Association does with its members.
- Prepare a pre-feasibility of heritage trail development in the Kispiox, focusing on the Telegraph Trail &Grease Trails.
- Review status of management planning with MoF and MSBTC on these systems.
- Request assistance from MSBTC and NBCTA for assistance in plan development.
- Investigate the feasibility of tapping into the E-Team Program[57] for trail development in the Kispiox.
- The program is part of Youth Options BC delivered by the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks and directed at youth aged 16 to 24. Projects must have an environmental or outdoor recreation focus, and 20 per cent of project time must be dedicated to training and developing skills for future employment.

Responsibility	Economic development agencies Local recreation clubs with trail interests Commercial operators with trail interests		
Potential Partners	FRBC	MoF	MSBTC

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[57] http://www.youth.gov.bc.ca/programs/eteams.asp

8.3.17 Human Resources Tourism Training and Education

Human Resources

→ Tourism Training and Education

Rationale:

Workforce development is one of the more difficult tasks not just for tourism but for the economy at large. The workforce is changing drastically from an industrialized production era to a high-tech, value-added, knowledge-based production of the information intensive industries of the future. These changes are leaving many workers under-employed and unemployed. Many workers will need to learn totally new skills to survive and become competitive in the new workforce of the future. Those who do not will find work harder and harder to find. Communities involved in tourism development need to be aware of this situation and to focus efforts on providing opportunities for gaining the advanced skills necessary for new workforce demands. In addition to these training demands, there are new challenges such as developing strategies to keep youth in the community and the attraction of workers into the local labour market. Challenges include:

- ➢ Determining the workforce needs of local tourism businesses in order to be effective and competitive.
- ➢ Creating local training programs to address these needs.
- ➢ Recruiting trainees among youth and other workforce participants.
- ➢ Communicating tourism employment opportunities and careers to the workforce.

By paying attention to local training and education capacity, communities can increase the economic impacts of tourism development because operators will be more likely to source their staffing needs locally. Personnel trained locally and more likely to be aware about local environmental, social and economic issues and be advocates for the region rather than just the business itself.

Actions

- Promote tourism career opportunities to the workforce.
- The stereotype of the low-paid tourism job is not entirely accurate. There are a range of occupations that require a variety of skills and training, and earnings reflect these differences. Industries with an important tourism component where weekly wages are above the sector average include air transport, museums and archives, auto and truck rental and travel services. Even the entry-level jobs in tourism which are low-paying provide an opportunity for new workforce entrants to gain experience and ascend to better positions at higher pay. The seasonal and part-time positions available in tourism can be a valuable source of employment for those members of the workforce who may not want full-time work, for example because of family obligations.
- Identify ways to increase partnerships between operators and students (e.g. guide mentoring or apprenticing program). A mentorship program can be highly effective method of in-the-field training.
- Expand use of NBCTA training opportunities.
- Encourage the use of SuperHost tourism training program developed by Tourism BC.

Responsibility	▸ Economic development agencies ▸ Community Futures
Potential Partners	▸ HRDC ▸ Northwest Community College ▸ School districts

8.3.18 Human Resources Entrepreneurial Skill Development

Human Resources	
→	Entrepreneurial Skill Development

Rationale:

Entrepreneurship (the conception of both business and non-business enterprises in all their forms) is one of the keystones of community economic development. Entrepreneurs are the risk takers, innovators and agents of change who will generate new business development and improve the economic and social welfare of the community. Entrepreneurs can sometimes be attracted to a region, but the best prospects for future prosperity reside in those communities which have successfully developed their own culture and spirit of entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs are not born - they have to be educated, nurtured, and assisted in an environment that will allow them to realize their potential. A community which values and encourages entrepreneurship will have a much more valuable tool for adapting to change and developing a prosperous economy.

Entrepreneurship is important for tourism development in the Study Area. Economic development practitioners are concerned that the school system is not developing young entrepreneurs who could lead economic change in the future, especially in tourism where new ideas and innovations are needed.

Actions

- Assess demand and potential for young entrepreneur programs.
- There are resources available for encouraging young entrepreneurs. Junior Achievement and the province's You BET program[58] are both targeted at youth entrepreneurship, but neither is delivered in the Kalum area. A Junior Achievement program would be a longer-term project because it requires more forward planning, but You BET could easily be delivered in the short-term, providing enough interest was shown by area youth. You BET consists of a series of one-day workshops aimed at introducing youth to entrepreneurship as a career option. It can be delivered by the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture free to the community, provided there is a demonstrated need and demand.
- Support career preparation programs that support both entrepreneurship and tourism/recreation.
- Assess feasibility of Kitimat Skills Centre delivery of short-duration seminars and courses targeted at existing operators.
- Currently, the Skills Centre is heavily oriented to industrial programs but could be encouraged to expand into tourism training.
- Operators could be surveyed to gauge the level of interest in courses.

Responsibility	▸ Economic development agencies ▸ Community Futures
Potential Partners	▸ HRDC ▸ Northwest Community College ▸ School district

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[58] http://www.youth.gov.bc.ca/programs/youbet.asp

8.4 Additional Regional Recommendations

While there are specific tourism opportunities that each community may want to consider developing, in order to raise the awareness of tourism and efficiently support tourism operators in the region, collaboration among key stakeholders and the communities in the Kispiox Forest District / Gitxsan First Nation should be considered. The following outlines key strategy areas in which regional collaboration would be beneficial.

8.4.1 Coordinated Tourism Planning

- ❖ Explore the collaborative and comprehensive tourism strategy for Northwestern BC. Currently, each community has identified specific tourism initiatives for their community. These communities could benefit by increasing their utilization of the existing regional and/or local tourism association to further link their local tourism priorities with the surrounding communities to create regional approaches and images for specific key tourism goals.
- ❖ Investigate the development of a natural history, cultural and heritage strategy. This strategy could, in part, expand the interpretive opportunities to support the development of adventure tourism products.
- ❖ Undertake a gap analysis of the infrastructure requirements and improvements required throughout the Kispiox Forest District to support specific types of tourism product development. Enter into discussions with existing tourism businesses and tourism associations operating inside the region, as well as those who might be enticed to expand operations to the region. Discuss the requirements each product sector has, ensure their needs are filled, and then actively promote the improvements that have been implemented.

8.4.2 Development of Strategic Partnerships

- ❖ Explore relationships with communities adjacent to the Kispiox Forest District. The formation of strategic alliances provides access to funding opportunities for joint marketing and promotion initiatives such as those provided by the Canadian Tourism Commission.
- ❖ Work with key senior government agencies to plan and implement tourism development. These agencies need to be active participants in addressing key local tourism issues. As well government agencies need to be encouraged to proactively inform local tourism operators and organizations of the programs, projects and government policies that impact tourism. Some of the key government agencies and service organizations that could play a role in the development of tourism initiatives and tourism business development include:

- British Columbia Assets and Lands Corporation
- Community Futures Development Corporations
- BC Ministry of Small Business Tourism and Culture
- BC Ministry of Forests
- Northern Development Commission
- Forest Renewal BC
- Human Resources Development Canada

- BC Ministry of Community Development, Cooperatives and Volunteers
- Tourism British Columbia
- BC Parks
- Upper Skeena Tourism Council
- Northern British Columbia Tourism Association
- University of Northern British Columbia
- Northwest Community College

❖ A favourable relationship with federal, provincial, and municipal or local governments is essential to create a climate to attract investment and to foster the timely development of tourism products in the Kispiox Forest District. It is proposed that responsibility and resources be defined to undertake liaison activities between government agencies and the local tourism and community interests in order to:

  - Educate and inform regulatory agencies of tourism development priorities in the communities on the region. With the regulatory agencies it is important to develop an open and on-going rapport as to the community needs and objectives.
  - Develop a local understanding of regulatory agencies' requirements, and an understanding of the appropriate processes for new development from the point of municipal, provincial, and federal perspectives. Maintaining on-going communications with regulatory agencies will assist with understanding how regulatory decisions are made, and develop the relationships required to overcome development barriers.
  - Educate and inform funding agencies as to the activities and priorities of the local tourism sector. This will assist funding agencies with a traditional focus of participation in fishery, forestry and other primary resource-based initiatives to become more comfortable with the process of tourism development. It may also allow them to be more proactive in their participation and allow the community to directly introduce individual tourism developers to key funding agencies to explore project development opportunities.

8.4.3 Tourism Business and Product Development

❖ Support business development of local tourism sector opportunities by establishing a group of business mentors and local financial experts to advise on the issues and requirements of securing financing. Securing financing for entrepreneurs who wish to operate tourism businesses will be challenging. Many traditional lending institutions do not like to lend to ventures located in remote areas of British Columbia. The local mentors and financial experts could:

  - Consider the local merits of establishing a local Community Venture Capital Corporation (through the Ministry of Community Development, Cooperatives and Volunteers), which could further increase the access to capital for tourism, related businesses.
  - Assist with the development of a network of venture capital avenues and alternative financing opportunities for tourism businesses.

  - Educate local financial agencies as to the potential and opportunities within the local tourism sector and work towards informing the financial community around issues of perceived and real risks in the tourism sector.
  - Explore the development of lending circles to support tourism business start-up.

- Work with the Community Futures Development Corporation of 16/37 and Northern BC Tourism Association to ensure up-to-date tourism information is in place to support local tourism business development. For example, there many sources of tourism data such as research done by the Canadian Tourism Commission. To access as an individual could be very time consuming. However, by ensuring it is in one place locally and up-to-date would ensure businesses are getting the best data possible for key business decisions.

- Work towards identifying and developing a code of ethics for tourism operators involved with the various product areas offered in the region. Provincial standards and standards developed by industry associations in other jurisdictions should provide excellent guidance to these efforts. By adhering to a set of standards, tourism operators in the Kispiox Forest District will ensure that they are delivering a top quality product.

- Explore with tourism business operators the development of specific product packages to be targeted at identified key markets. In order to properly market tourism products it is critical to have well defined products and services.

- Establish a task force to explore the opportunities and disadvantages for local operators to develop joint ventures and partnerships with larger tourism companies from outside the region. Many tourism opportunities require specialized skills, experience with specific market networks and significant capital investment. Local resources should be identified to guide exploration of the potential for joint ventures with larger more experienced ventures from outside the region. At a minimum, proponents of a new tourism business should be encouraged to approach existing businesses offering similar products to gain insight into the needs and markets of that product sector.

8.4.4 Develop and Maintain Transportation Infrastructure for Tourism

- Raise the awareness of the importance of the local road infrastructure in the region for tourism purposes. Work with local, provincial, and federal governments to identify and implement priority highway maintenance and upgrading.

- Work with transportation providers and the Council of Tourism Associations of British Columbia to ensure that public air and bus linkages are complimentary and supportive of the region's tourism industry. Investigate key issues such as service, prices and schedules.

- Investigate the further development of rail passenger service to the region. Rail travel by tourists has been enjoying good growth in BC in recent years and with the reduction in coal and forest product shipments in northern BC and the talk of developing an Alaskan rail line, railways may be interest in exploring new viable business opportunities in the region.

8.4.5 Ensure Effective and Efficient Marketing

- Focus on regional marketing and explore development of a regional image by undertaking group marketing of the unique features of the Kispiox Forest District. Efforts should be coordinated with the Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Tourism Association, the Northern BC Tourism Association and the Branding of the Peace Initiative to ensure connectivity. Tourism proponents can create an image that will raise the profile of the Kispiox Forest District to compete with other global destinations that feature wilderness or outdoor experiences.

- Work with Northern BC Tourism Association to form strategic partnerships with regional tourism associations to identify new ways and approaches to coordinate and develop additional resources for marketing efforts. Northern BC with its small population base is at a disadvantage when it comes to marketing resources typically available for marketing efforts. A more coordinated approach would ensure that resources are efficiently and effectively utilized by:
  - Leveraging regional marketing funding from funding agencies and surrounding organizations by developing partnerships and strategic alliances to pool resources for the area. Communities should explore ways of supporting existing efforts by the Upper Skeena Tourism Association and Northern BC Tourism Association to collaboratively bring additional marketing resources into the area.
  - Ensuring packaging of complimentary products – tourism packaging and marketing of tourism packages is closely tied and having several operators combine their efforts could be beneficial.
  - Liaisoning with communities, Northern BC Tourism Association, the Upper Skeena Tourism Association and other tourism stakeholders to coordinate the targeting of tourism resources at trade shows and other marketing events to ensure efficient marketing expenditures.
  - Make a concerted effort to provide tourism organizations with current information, which can be submitted to media outlets, tourism magazines and major tourism operators on a consistent basis. This allows local operators to capture free advertising and attention. The Northern BC Tourism Association needs unique local tourism stories from the communities to capture the interest and generate excitement among the numerous representatives associated with these types of events.

9 Annex A — Data Collection Results

9.1 Survey Results

A total of 65 operators were identified as having head offices or operations that take place in the Kispiox Forest District. All operators were sent a mail or fax survey. Twenty five percent of the total number of tourism operators in the study area responded to the surveys or telephone interviews. Information regarding operators who did not participate in the survey was extracted from secondary sources. The distribution of responses were as follows:

Response Category	**Number**	**Percent**
Survey population	65	100%
Telephone interview completed	9	
Returned completed survey	5	
Total response and response rate	**16**	**25%**

9.1.1 Respondent Profile

The following set of tables show the distribution of tourism operators in the study area by various categories of operation. A number of operators offer two or more types of tourism activities and in some cases several distinct types of tourism operations. The primary activities are noted on a separate column. Each of the secondary activities is given an equal weight, resulting in totals greater than the total number of operators in the study area.

Exhibit 29: Kispiox Tourism Stakeholder Survey – Respondent Profile

Accommodations			
Code	Description	Primary / Secondary	
A01	Hotel	1	0
A02	Motel	3	0
A03	RV/Campground	7	1
A04	Lodge/Resort	8	1
A05	Camps	18	1
A06	Huts/ Cabins	1	4
A07	Cabins/Cottages	0	2
A09	Bed and Breakfast	1	0
A11	Hostel	0	0
	Total	39	9

Attractions			
Code	Description	Primary / Secondary	
T01	Museum	1	0
T02	Arts/Culture/Heritage	10	2
T03	Recreation	32	9
T07	Nature	0	37
T08	Sports	0	0
T09	Golf - public	0	0
T11	Golf - semi-private	0	0
T12	Marina - public	0	0
T14	Ski Facility	0	0
T16	Rental	0	0
	Total	43	48

Guides/Tour Operators			
Code	Description	Primary / Secondary	
R01	Guide-outfitter	13	2
R02	River rafting	14	3
R04	Marine Charters, Fresh	10	10
R05	Air tours/charters	1	0
R07	Kayak/Canoe	4	11
R08	Bus Charters / Tours	1	2
R11	Hiking/Mountaineering	4	17
R14	Snowmobile	1	0
R16	Rockclimbing	0	1
R17	Horse and Trail	0	5
R18	Ski Touring	1	3
R19	Other	1	1
	Total	50	55

Transportation (Scheduled)			
Code	Description	Total	
P05	Air	-	
P08	Bus	-	
P09	Rail	1	
P19	Taxi	-	
P20	Car Rental	-	
		1	

9.1.2 Study Contacts

Study Contacts	
Name	**Organization**
Ray Carrier	Land and Water British Columbia Inc.
Ron Fowler	Nine Mile Snowmobile Club
Christoph Deitzfelbinger	Bear Enterprises Ltd.
Derrick Mohr	Driftwood Valley Outfitters
Wendel Imhof	Alpine Lakes Air
Roger Mccolm	Northern Sun Tours
Peter Krause	MC Bicycle Shop
Cary McClean	Skeena Eco Expeditions

9.1.3 Survey Respondents

Survey Respondents
Company/Organization
Alpine Lakes Air
Bear Enterprises Ltd.
Canadian Helicopters
Dem-La-Hamid Llama
Driftwood Valley Outfitters
Grizzly River Adventures
Misty Mountain Outfitters
Nine Mile Snowmobile Club
Northern Lights Wilderness Tours
Northern Sun Tours Ltd.
Old Town Adventures
Rivers West Adventures
Rocky Mountain River guides
Seeley Lake B & B
Skeena Air/Coyote Lodge
Skeena Eco Expeditions

9.1.4 Survey Highlights

To follow below is a summary of the comments and suggestions for three key open-ended questions asked during the survey process:

***Question 7** – What are some of the **key issues affecting tourism development** in the Kispiox &/or Bulkley Forest Districts?*

- The negativity found in being able to work with MELP and the Ministry of Fisheries.
- Lack of hydro and telephone access to our area of operation – very expensive to install.
- Recreational use, summer and winter.
- Need good community attitude towards tourism.
- BC Tourism marketing Vancouver/Victoria/Whistler – no help from government for marketing.
- I am not allowed a highway sign for my B & B because I am 3 km from main highway.
- Poor comments and attitude towards tourism
- Lack of opportunities with train – many of my guests can't get on the train.
- Advertising & Marketing
- Need more activities, preferably guided.
- Need help (financial) for people stating a business.
- Need recreational land developed and marketed
- Need accessible trails
- Uncertainty of Air Canada supplying sufficient service to Smithers
- Others are encroaching into pristine wilderness areas and BCAL issuing tenures overlapping other existing tenures. To provide pristine wilderness there has to be a limited number of operators in any given area.
- Lack of dependable service to the area – ie air service.

- We all need to be successful. The job to attract guests here needs to be a community decision. If we all pool our resources we could become a tourism destination.
- Mostly tourists are passing through. We need to attract tourists to this area as a destination.
- Further access via roads (more roads) in the area I use would greatly reduce the viability and reason we promote the area.
- Opportunities in recreation are endless but must be managed now before it becomes an issue.
- Chamber of Commerce does not take tourism seriously – skilled labour is available locally, so is training capacity.
- Total lack of real open and honest round table planning.
- Uncontrolled logging roads into the headwaters without sufficient planning or comprehensive thought beforehand.
- Tourism is trivialized by most commonly held thinking styles here in BC.
- There is a huge need for discussion and education aimed at building new relationships.
- Government bureaucracy is biggest problem – too many regulations and very, very slow in processing applications.
- Weather to a lesser degree – summer season is too short.
- Lack of communication between communities, especially for marketing.
- Availability of capital is always a problem.
- Hospitality is generally poor in this region.
- Accessibility
- Seasonality or weather
- Road Developments
- Need for qualified rafting guides – current demand exceeds carrying capacity.
- Key strength of region – "off the beaten path" and great wilderness areas.
- Strength – mountains and glaciers
- Lack of reasonable air fares to Smithers
- No RV rentals
- Poor management of guiding by Ministry of Environment.
- Carrying capacity (Air)
- Resource Land Use Management or Policy
- Community attitude to tourism
- Small guide businesses need access to the unused rod days that the government has unassigned or taken back.
- There must be more fishing guide licences issued to more people on classified water.
- Government implements their own agenda without using local feedback.
- Large tour operators cornering markets (QCI – if all guests at major lodges caught their limit, there would be no quota left for small operators in Masset and QCC.
- Depressed local economy
- Availability of capital
- No proximity to other attractions

Question 8 *– What do you feel are the* ***best new potential tourism development opportunities*** *in the ecotourism/adventure travel sector in the Kispiox &/or Bulkley Forest Districts?*

- To build around the successful operations to take advantage on a value added basis for clients from around the world. Currently, there is not much available outside of the activity folks come for – fishing, hunting, etc.
- More winter promotion of area – ie snowmobiling
- More tourism information to be sent out by our area tourism to USA – ie Alaska and northern states near Canadian border.
- Make stopping in Kispiox/Bulkley more desirable and promote local tourism to all ferry traffic as next stop heading east on Hwy 16 – 5 hours.
- Back country skiing – non-motorized
- Campgrounds in forested areas.
- Campgrounds for large rigs.
- Laundromats and showers for campers.
- More day trips, ie hiking, camping, boating, wildlife viewing. Guides cover the longer trips of 10 to 14 days.
- New tourism coordinator with the Chamber of Commerce, Gladys Atrill. She has motivation and hopefully she will have the financial resources to continue the work she is doing.
- Howsun Hut & Tyhee Mtn winter trails – we could take the opportunity to promote our wilderness.
- Soft tourism – ie adventure related but not strenuous.
- Hiking
- There isn't much left to be saved, especially after seeing the last logging plans north of the Babine River and in the Upper Skeena and Sicintine River Region.
- The profession of modern guiding needs to be nurtured more than sites identified or experiences marketed.
- Wilderness areas are way more valuable than graded, logged lands.
- Guides need to have interesting character and an entreprenurial heart.
- Modern tourism has to do with relationships.
- Wilderness camping
- Wildlife viewing
- Hiking
- Fishing
- Winter tourism
- Guiding
- Sightseeing
- River Rafting
- Boating
- Hiking
- Fishing
- Promoting land use for tourism
- Keeping roads in good shape
- Provide tours with an education component – ie field based activities that combine leisure and learning: language learning, first nations history, field based ecology.
- Heli Skiing at Bell II.

- Fish Guiding – all non-canadians must hire guide.
- Expansion of ski area (Smithers)
- Fishing
- Better fisheries management and development
- More angling guides for the ever increasing amount of tourists
- Wildlife viewing
- First nations involvement with tourists
- Eco-hiking
- Ecotours
- Promotion of native sites and arts

Question 9* – *What *do you* ***believe should be done to encourage further development in the ecotourism and adventure travel segment*** *of tourism? Are there specific actions you would like to see undertaken in your district(s)?*

- A very good working relationship with respective ministries and departments would go a long way. Currently MELP & Ministry of Fisheries are not prepared to work with stakeholders in an open partnership. Government needs to work in cooperation rather than be a dictator. Believe it or not, business knows how to operate – big brother needs not to be so controlling.
- Better advertising to all potential tourists as to what we can offer in our area.
- Information signs at highway stops are great in town, however a sign of local interests would be great if offered at other locations and towns – ie Prince Rupert for Ferry traffic.
- Have VIA Rail add one more car for tourists with user friendly schedules and taking bikes
- Marketing
- B & B Association with common website
- More money for advertising in Europe and USA
- More active local tourism group
- Support for tourism association (Hazelton)
- Conduct open, honest, real life meetings between MELP and Tourism and Guides.
- Nurture and strengthen good relationships with all guides.
- Allow for diversity.
- Creat a climate where tourism is valued – not trivialized.
- Outfitters, hunting and fishing, bring more to the community then anyone but are the least recognized by tourism.
- Better air line service. Something has to be done. It's a fiasco.
- Grants
- Tax Breaks
- Develop a hiking trail similar to the West Coast Trail with an alpine theme. Maybe across Hudson Bay Mtn to McDonnell Lake up the Serb Creek Trail ending near Terrace – maybe 6 day hike. Much of trail is already in place.
- More knowledgeable tourist information put out as well as staff that know the area and what it can offer.
- In reality all we have left is the parks and upper Skeena, Sicintine and Shelagyote for another five years or so.
- Since 1985 we have lost 31 fly-in camping destinations within a 100 mile radius of Smithers. There are only 14 pristine wilderness fly-in destinations left
- Get government to stop over regulatiing the industry.

- Marketing our area as a package and a destination rather than a stop on the way to somewhere else.
- Want one law for all BC people – give natives the same hunting and fishing rights as non-natives.
- Close rivers for fishing that have weak returns of fish.
- More fish hatcheries and spawning areas.
- Better management of our resources.
- Cut the number of civil servants in BC as most appear to be unproductive.
- Promotion
- Expand current cooperative initiatives among local tour operators
- Need high quality publication/brochure/booklet with photos and info on area in variety of languages.
- Do not make licensing of rights too expensive.
- Educate government about value of tourism over other land use decisions.
- Less restrictive policy regarding access to rivers
- Better camping facilities and boat launch access.
- Take control of the wilderness resource. Stop letting everyone from around the world come here and do whatever they want in our wilderness – we can't do it in their country.
- Government involvement will mean users will pay for the use of the resource. They will off load resource management to the few that have direct involvement.

9.1.5 Tourism Survey Instrument

On the following three pages, the reader will find a sample of the tourism stakeholder survey instrument.

BRITISH
COLUMBIA

Tourism Opportunities Study

Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture
Tourism Policy and Land Use Branch

Stakeholder Survey

The Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture (MSBTC) have selected the Bulkley & Kispiox Forest Districts for completion of two Tourism Opportunity Strategies (TOS). We are seeking your input as a local tourism operator in the completion of the TOS for these study areas (please see attached study area map).

A TOS is a study sponsored by the MSBTC – with partner agencies - to (i) update inventory information on current tourism/ecotourism operators in the study area and their key geographical areas of interest/use, and (ii) to examine a region's potential for further development in the ecotourism sector. The study is undertaken at a regional level, usually a forest district, to coincide with other land use planning processes and resource management agency boundaries. The information derived from a TOS is shared with several groups. Crown land managers are provided the updated inventory information so that they can include tourism interests in their own land management and development planning processes. Local economic and tourism development agencies use TOS information to assist with tourism marketing and economic development efforts. Finally, MSBTC will use the TOS results to support planning decisions by all agencies affecting the tourism industry. On completion of the TOS, the final report and data will be made immediately available through posting the final documents and maps as .pdf files on a MSBTC internet (ftp) site. This will ensure that all tourism stakeholders will have full access to the final reports in a very timely manner.

This survey is a critical component of the TOS and is undertaken on behalf of the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture (MSBTC) by a consulting team led by Meredith & Associates (Greg Meredith). The survey is comprised of two parts : Part I (questions 1 – 5) assists in updating tourism operator and resource inventory information; Part II (questions 6 – 9) seeks your input and opinions on key issues affecting ecotourism development in your region.

Please answer only those questions that apply to your business.

Organization/Company Name:____________________

Contact:________________ **Title:**________________

Mailing Address:____________________

Physical Address (if different from above):________________

City, Prov:____________ **Postal Code:**____________

Phone:________________ **Fax:**____________

E-Mail:________________

Web Site:________________

Part I :

1. If your company is a:

- Accommodation facility/property manager ☐, proceed to # 2.
- Tour operator (guide, adventure, etc) ☐ proceed to #3.

2. **If you are based in or use the district(s)** and offer **overnight** accommodation facilities, please indicate for each type of facility you operate, the following information.

Type of Facility	**Accommodation units (rooms)**	**Campground Sites**
Hotel / Motel		
Condominium		
Cabins	(# beds or cabins)	
Lodge / Resort		
Fishing / Guide Camp	(# beds or tents)	
Bed &Breakfast		
Vessel Lodge / Float house	(# beds or rooms)	
	# RV sites	**# Campsites**
RV Park / Campground	with hook -ups	
	no hook -ups	
	Moorage feet	**# Boats**
Moorage space		
	Number of Berths	
Charter Boat(s)		

2a. Which study area(s) {see map} do you utilize?

Bulkley FD ☐ **Kispiox FD** ☐ **Both** ☐

3. What are the **primary activities** provided by your operation in the district (Examples include: hiking, rafting, fishing).

▸ ______________________________

▸ ______________________________

▸ ______________________________

▸ ______________________________

4. What are the **secondary activities** provided by your operation (A secondary activity would not be supplied without the presence of the primary activity. A secondary activity does not have to be guided, e.g. wildlife watching, camping).

▸ ______________________________

▸ ______________________________

▸ ______________________________

▸ ______________________________

5. Please indicate the location of the **key geographical areas**; **resources** (i.e. trails); **and/or natural features** (i.e. waterfalls); that you frequently utilize in your operations. (Note: This information will be shared with crown land managers so that they are aware of individual tourism operators' geographical areas of interest for agency consultation and referral purposes.)

____

____

____

____

→ Please mark and label items on the attached map.

Would you like the above information (responses to Questions 1 – 5) to be provided to your regional tourism association for marketing and tourist referral purposes?

YES _____ ***NO*** _____

Part II :

6. Please indicate the number of people that you employed in 2000 for the operations in the district for the following categories:

_________ Full time year round
_________ Full time seasonal
_________ Part time year round
_________ Part time seasonal
_________ Total employees (persons)

Do you employ local residents? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, how many of the above employees would be local residents _________?

7. What are some of the key issues affecting tourism development in the Kispiox &/or Bulkley Forest Districts? You may wish to consider some of the outstanding strengths of the region, or perhaps factors, which are impeding or threatening further development. Table 1 provides some suggestions to assist with your response:

Table 1: Possible Issues and Opportunities for Tourism/Recreation Development		
Natural features (e.g., mountains, lakes)	Resource/land use management or policy	Community attitude to tourism
Recreation features	Local availability of required supplies & services	Market and demand conditions
Seasonality or weather	Hospitality/amenities in nearby community(s)	Competition
Cultural or historical features	Accessibility from nearest community	Availability of capital
Current degree of development or utilization	Proximity to other attractions	Local/regional skills/labour market
Carrying capacity	Local economic development initiatives or office	Local/regional training capacity

→

8. What do you feel are the best new potential tourism development opportunities in the ecotourism/adventure travel sector in the Kispiox and/or Bulkley Forest Districts?

→

9. What do you believe should be done to encourage further development in the ecotourism and adventure travel segment of tourism? Are there specific actions you would like to see undertaken in your district(s)?

Further comments (please use additional paper if required):

On behalf of all local tourism stakeholders, thank you very much for your participation & assistance ☺!

Should you have any questions regarding this survey or the Tourism Opportunity Study(s) in general please contact:

GREG MEREDITH Meredith & Associates Smithers 847-3196 silvertip@uniserve.com	DAVE HARRIS Hillcrest Recreation Consulting Telkwa 846-9246 harris@bulkley.net	For Kispiox: DOUG DONALDSON Gitxsan Liaison for Project Hazelton 842-6500 [illegible]	SARAH DOE MSBTC — Tourism Policy & Land Use Branch Victoria BC 387-6487

10 Annex B — Product Pre-Feasibility Profiles

There are 8 product profiles covered in this appendix. The purpose of the profiles is to give readers some understanding of the issues surrounding business development. The main report dealt with the two key issues of land/resource capability and community capacity for tourism development. This section takes a business focus by assessing other inputs an operator requires in order to create a competitive and successful commercial recreation venture. The products are:

- Canoeing/kayaking
- Hiking
- Snowmobiling
- Ski touring
- Cross-country skiing
- Road touring
- Lodge/resort
- Huts

Each profile consists of an assessment of market, locational, infrastructure, financial and business development issues. Key success factors and complementary activities are also discussed. Readers are reminded that the following profiles are general in nature. Further assessment and planning is required to determine the actual feasibility of product development in the Kispiox Forest District and/or Gitxsan First Nation.

10.1 Canoeing/Kayaking

<table>
<tr><td>Product Description</td><td colspan="4"><i>Canoe/kayak tour company.</i></td></tr>
<tr><td>Markets</td><td colspan="4">Participants/soft adventurers from BC, short-haul markets (Canada and US) and overseas markets (Germany).
Enthusiasts/hard adventurers (BC and Alberta residents).</td></tr>
<tr><td>Competition</td><td colspan="4">There is extensive competition regionally and across Canada for canoeing and kayaking. Canadian Rockies, Kootenays, Thompson Okanagan and the Cariboo offer quality river/lake experiences, with similar or better features.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Overall Potential</td><td colspan="4">Long-term trends show rising participation rates among North American markets, particularly among soft adventure participants rather than the extreme enthusiast market. All of these markets are seeking a broader outdoor adventure experience and may decide to participate in recreational paddling once in the region. The Kispiox FD can offer a range of close-in/remote adventures and is very well positioned to attract more visitors.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Location Needs</td><td colspan="4">For river activities, access to single and multi-day canoe/kayak routes, flat water routes and fast water routes, varying grades of water for all levels of expertise, play areas and water suitable for instruction are all important considerations.
For lakes, larger lakes with variable shorelines, and attractive scenery with little sign of human presence are the primary attractants for this activity. Generally, lakes that permit half-day to full day paddling and enable participants to achieve a sense of isolation (including being away from other participants) are preferred. Smaller lakes can also have potential, but would require the presence of additional features to enhance the experience. Such features include historical or cultural sites, wildlife viewing, sandy beaches, waterfalls, fishing, etc.
Less modified landscapes are preferred to highly modified landscapes.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Issues</td><td>Licences & permits
Weather conditions</td><td>Fluctuating water levels on reservoirs</td><td>Environmental, wildlife and fishing guidelines</td><td>Good road access & egress points</td></tr>
<tr><td>Infrastructure</td><td colspan="4">Access for put- in and take-out
Camp sites
Transportation access from staging area
Shuttling services
Accommodation and food service support
Trained guides & instructors</td></tr>
</table>

10.1 Canoeing/Kayaking	
Financial	Low capital costs - Typically, to operate within established industry standards, maximum tour group size is ten guests with two guides, and using a mixed fleet of double and single kayaks or canoes. A fleet of 5 double and two single fiberglass kayaks, with all necessary kayaking equipment (paddles, PFDs, spray decks, pumps, and required safety equipment) would cost an operator between $25-30,000. Many companies also provide tents, sleeping pads, dry bags, paddling jackets or wetsuits, and all camp kitchen facilities (shelter, portable stove, pots, etc.). Start-up equipment needs and costs will vary depending on partnerships with other tourism product operators, and on the style and remoteness of the trips. Operators offering kayaking tours had annual revenues of approximately $120,000 in 1993, with approximately one third bringing in less than $50,000. The kayak business is very profitable because of lower-than-average operating expenses. The average outfit has 700 clients with an average daily revenue of $113 per traveller. The average trip length was 5.7 days.
Business Development	Instruction services are essential for a guiding outfit so having instructors with the ability to clearly explain, demonstrate and provide feedback and coaching is a benefit. This usually means instructors/guides who have proven certification and demonstrate an ability to teach. Nature observation, wildlife viewing and fishing are also attractants for these markets. The German market, especially, is interested in wildlife viewing. Whether canoeing or kayaking, product development has to incorporate some outstanding recreational feature, aesthetic appeal or valued secondary activity. Multi-activity packaging and interpretation is essential. More vertical integration of product design and marketing is required, including raising awareness of the potential of lakes and rivers among BC residents (i.e. enthusiasts who are activity-oriented travellers). Resource management has a significant impact on the marketability of canoeing and kayaking. The extensive evidence of industrial forestry has compromised the potential of some river sections. Visual quality is a very important attribute for this pursuit. Hydroelectric activity is a major consideration for river and lake product – water levels will influence how and where development can take place. The most reliable flow rates/levels for river activities are associated with fall to spring precipitation (which are also colder months). If an operator uses a specific land feature such as a beach or camp on a regular basis then CBR tenure will be required. Typically, conflicts with other users are low, but jet boats can be a problem in high use areas. People are generally looking for shorter trips, on average for 7 days when travelling abroad. Yield management for tour operators will be increasingly important as a result of running more numerous, short-term trips.

10.1 Canoeing/Kayaking

Key Success Factors	Having modern, well-maintained equipment is important. This will require ongoing upgrading to newer equipment, which is especially important for river kayaking. A variety of water classes will give an operator some flexibility when catering to markets. Good whitewater is essential for enthusiasts, while lower classes are needed when serving lower-skilled, soft adventurers. If waterflow is controlled by dams, a coordinated plan to match water conditions with planned usage is important. This means investing time and effort in developing the itineraries and routes for trips. There should be pre-prepared options in the event of poor weather. Put-in and take-out sites should be easily accessible while coordinated support should be in place for take-outs. Interpreters and guides with a thorough knowledge of the area and ability to convey this in an interesting and informative way will appeal strongly to the soft adventure market which is interested in more than the canoeing or kayaking activity itself. This also applies to food and accommodation planning, making sure that clients have been matched with the anticipated service expectations.
Complementary Activities	Natural and cultural features viewing. Heritage interpretation. Fishing. Camping. Hut systems.

10.2 Hiking

Product Description	***Guided Interpretive hikes and nature tours.***
Markets	All markets, especially the soft adventure visitors among short-haul (Canada and US), long-haul (Canada and US) and overseas markets (Germany). Hiking enthusiasts (interpretive tours into new areas). Park visitors, including tour travellers. Seniors for Elderhostels Nature lovers of all ages
Competition	There is extensive competition regionally, nationally and internationally for travellers interested in pursuing hiking. The hiking enthusiast in pursuit of a challenging, wilderness trek product has a wide range of products and experiences to choose from. The national parks cater extensively to this market. Many communities and all parks have developed trail inventories and related services that create a safe and interesting product for the soft adventurer/participant.
Overall Potential	The potential for development in the region is average. There are high quality resources and visitor markets that place a high value on hiking activity. However, a lack of well known trail systems will limit development. Demand will continue to increase for hiking both as a primary activity and as a secondary activity in conjunction with other products. Because of its accessibility, low skill requirements, relative safety and instant appeal, growth rates among North American and European hiking markets are expected to continue to climb even as the overall population ages. The potential for commercial hiking tours spans a full range of options from multi-day trekking tours to short interpreted tours of the frontcountry.
Location Needs	Wilderness areas and parks. Trails and trail systems. High scenic and natural values. Wildlife and wildlife viewing opportunities. Natural habitats. Solitude.
Issues	Applicable licences and permits. Wildlife issues – most clients want to see bears. Conflicts on trails with other users.
Infrastructure	Well signed and maintained trails Roads for access Shuttle service Maps / information Certified hiking guides

10.2 Hiking

<table>
<tr><td>Financial</td><td colspan="2">Low capital costs – hiking and backpacking does not require a significant investment in equipment but trail and accommodation infrastructure is very important. Since the provision of these components can rarely be justified based on revenues available from hiking, multi-activity tourism has to be accommodated.
The average Canadian tour operator offering hiking as the major activity had annual gross revenues of $167,000 in 1993. Almost two thirds of operators brought in less than $50,000 and this contributed to a low average gross margin of 6.9%, considerably less than other activities. With an average number of travellers of 1,390, this equated to about $120 in revenue per traveller.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Business Development</td><td colspan="2">The average Canadian hiking tour operator employed five seasonal personnel in 1993, with the majority of operators have less than four staff. Trained interpreters/guides who are experts in the area and interact well with people are important. First aid training is also a factor for day-hikes as well as for overnight trips.
Target future M-K park visitors, including tour travellers in promotional activities.
Niche marketing (e.g. slide shows, local presentations, communication with community groups) should be used to increase regional awareness of newly developed hiking products.
The operation should be flexible enough to offer day hikes as well as overnight trips. The latter will have to be pressed through tour wholesalers or retail tour operators. Day hikes can be directly marketed to regional visitors who have some flex time for a short excursion.
Hiking tour routes have to be developed around highly scenic, natural and recreational, and/or heritage/cultural resources. The better the signage, parking, garbage disposal, washrooms, and interpretative facilities the better the trip experience will be for users. Quality map information and investment in facilities is also important.
In order for a guiding operation to succeed, it must provide a value-added service that hikers cannot obtain through self-guided hikes. This means creating a high-end experience through linkages to cultural/heritage interpretation, wildlife viewing, meals and lodging.
Develop specialized tours or specialize completely in a specific market segment such as women only, seniors or at-risk youth. Although hiking appeals to a wide range of people demographically, it is important to identify specific target markets and their distinct needs.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Key Success Factors</td><td colspan="2">For soft adventure travellers, well-developed, relatively easy trails, in an uncrowded and pristine environment are preferred.
Interesting features for nature and/or culture for day trips.
Overnight trips need access to good camping or hut locations. Soft adventure travellers will prefer lodges/cabins while the enthusiast will prefer tenting.
Offering activities which add an educational or recreational component such as nature interpretation and wildlife viewing and photography. This may include teaching participants how to minimize impact when hiking and camping in wilderness areas.
Developing good routes for trips including contingency routes in case of poor weather conditions or other parties.
Understanding, then exceeding, expectations of participants for meals. An operator should always enquire about dietary restrictions and preferences of participants before the trip and develop a meal plan accordingly.
For soft adventure, inbound logistics are important – providing the right transportation from a primary site, to the staging area and beyond is critical. This will require detailed planning to ensure that the appropriate vehicles are available and supplies packed.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Complementary Activities</td><td>Accommodations
Visitor Centre</td><td>Locally focused booking / central registry agency</td></tr>
</table>

10.3 Snowmobiling

Product Description	Snowmobile terrain complex (location for related special events).
Markets	In BC, the regional and Canadian short-haul visitors comprise the majority of the snowmobile market. The best potential is within the regional market with a 500 mile radius, primarily Alberta. Participation by US and international visitors is minor. Soft-adventurers who are participating in other winter destination activities such as downhill and cross-country skiing are prime targets.
Competition	Broad choice of destinations are available across the province. Province-wide trail network will improve access to quality terrain in affected communities, but it will also increase participation. For commercial operators, converting self-guided visitors to buyers of a commercial product will be a major challenge.
Overall Potential	There is good resource attributes and snow conditions for snowmobiling throughout western portions of the District. The activity is growing extremely fast, perhaps more so than any other outdoor activity, motorized or non-motorized. The increased demand and use is coming from residents, regional visitors and short-haul visitors. The major limiting factors include distance from major regional markets and the lack of service infrastructure.
Location Needs	A site should be 5 – 10 minutes from a town or service centre to take advantage of infrastructure, services such as fuel and mechanical, and hospitality (food, beverage, accommodation). Site must have a variety of terrain (ups, downs, flats).
Issues	Business licence Wildlife Noise Pollution Zoning Liability insurance Access Conflicting use
Infrastructure	On site needs include concession, washroom facilities, storage, parking, signage etc. A facility could be based on a commercial business, but for less developed areas it may be more practical to have the local snowmobile club manage the operation. A certain amount of sweat equity and volunteer time would be required to offset capital costs anyway.
Financial	Moderate capital costs – a basic facility comprising trail building and minor service development would incur cash costs of at least $25,000 to $35,000 plus contributed equity in the form of volunteer labour.
Business Development	The cooperation of local snowmobilers is essential as it will be difficult to justify the investment in facilities on a strictly commercial basis. Any development in a major community would automatically attract local users and may conflict with other possible uses (e.g. cross-country skiing). A new facility could be based on an all-season product (e.g. ATVs, motor cross in the summer). Developing trails in co-operation with off-season users such as hikers, mountain bikers and horseback riders would also facilitate development.

10.3 Snowmobiling

Key Success Factors	Access to high quality resources. Ensuring trails and play areas are well-maintained by working with local snowmobile clubs and associations. Improving infrastructure and hospitality services to encourage longer and more frequent trips. Working with government and tourism agencies as well as environmental groups to develop and promote the trail systems, avoid user conflicts and manage visitation to avoid carrying capacity constraints. Developing a code of conduct for safety and environmental concerns which is strictly adhered to.
Complementary Activities	Special events. Repair and maintenance services. Sales and rentals.

10.4 Ski Touring

<table>
<tr><td>Product Description</td><td colspan="4">Guiding ski touring services.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Markets</td><td colspan="4">Experienced/hard adventurers from all markets, with the best potential among short-haul US and Canadian markets.
Participation rates are low but market demand is annually increasing.
Good potential among soft adventurers (destination-oriented decision-makers) who may be introduced to ski touring given up-to-date ski technology, safe conditions and quality instruction.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Competition</td><td colspan="4">There are several areas in BC and Alberta with quality ski touring terrain.
Infrastructure is very well developed in the Canadian Rockies, clustered around the National Parks.
Commercial operators will be challenged to attract clientele, because the park system, local alpine clubs and societies provide access to over 40 public backcountry huts to ski tourers at little or no cost.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Overall Potential</td><td colspan="4">Demand is low but growing for this product. As skiing technology improves and as lift-service options expand, ski touring will become even more accessible to a broader market. Parks Canada has stated that there is potential for some immediate modest growth in the local, regional and international adventure recreation markets, principally among winter backcountry users. Promotional efforts could be focussed on the parks' high quality winter backcountry recreation opportunities in trying to convert more international visitors from touring travellers to ecotourists. The best potential for commercial development is in association with hut or lodge-based operations.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Location Needs</td><td colspan="4">Available terrain within the parks system
Good variety of terrain (beginner to expert, treed to alpine)
Variety of access options (from roads, helicopter)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Issues</td><td>Requirement for certified & licensed guides</td><td>Tenured access to large areas of varied terrain</td><td>Wildlife conflicts
Avalanche hazards</td><td>Conflicts with other users</td></tr>
<tr><td>Infrastructure</td><td colspan="4">Roaded access
Backcountry huts and cabins
Front-country food /accommodation services</td></tr>
<tr><td>Financial</td><td colspan="4">Low capital costs – initial costs would be low comprising equipment and gear. If needed, transportation services could be contracted locally. Any hut or lodge development would add significantly to costs.
The average Canadian tour operator offering ski touring as the major activity had annual gross revenues of $230,122 in 1993, with about 50% bringing in less than $50,000 annually. The gross margins are not that attractive, averaging 4.2% due to higher-than-average operational expenses. The average number of skiers per operation was 572, trip length was between 4 and 4½ days, and per day revenues approximately $100. This is believed to be a good representation of the BC sector as almost one half of all operators in the country are based in BC.</td></tr>
</table>

10.4 Ski Touring

Business Development	Hiring qualified and certified guides and instructors is increasingly important as backcountry visitation increases and the risk to personal safety climbs. The vast majority of commercial ski tour operators use professionally certified adventure travel guides and/or tour leaders. Telemark skiing will become increasingly popular as will the overall market for Nordic skiing. This will create demand for good beginner instruction and also increase the importance of the accommodation and other facilities in attracting the broader market. Specific niche markets such as women-only clinics and tours have good potential for expansion. As user fees becomes more prevalent in backcountry areas, more operators may begin working with recreational skiers and clubs to maintain and enhance high quality areas. Providing courses packaged with rentals and guided tours will encourage beginners and casual participants to participate.
Key Success Factors	Good access to high quality terrain, including permits/tenure for secluded backcountry areas. For the destination-based traveller, high quality accommodation and support facilities. If specialized target markets are being attracted, then developing menu and accommodations have to be designed accordingly. High quality, well-maintained equipment, with a variety of sizes suitable for the family market. Ability to answer questions from both beginners and experts on equipment and trails in the area.
Complementary Activities	Development of temporary or permanent backcountry accommodations (tents/yurts, huts/cabins/lodges).

10.5 Cross-Country Skiing

Product Description	***Development of a long distance Nordic ski trail system and event sponsorship to attract skiers and promote spin-off benefits for the community (e.g. loppet).***
Markets	Participants and enthusiasts from BC and short-haul markets, especially Alberta. The US and overseas markets are limited, but downhill skiers of all geographic origins are a potential target. Families and local skiers. Racers and elite athletes. Destination skiers who want to try a variety of activities.
Competition	There are many well-established cross-country ski areas in BC and Alberta that offer similar terrain features and snow conditions and in some cases have superior infrastructure and amenities. There are 22 major races/loppets in BC this year, primarily in the Interior and the Okanagan.
Overall Potential	Long-term participation trends are only average, and the ability to stage events should be tied to a well-serviced Nordic centre which will have the capacity to deal with periodic increases in activity. According to Cross Country BC, "super events" could have some potential in the province, especially if they can appeal to the softer, beginner markets. Current loppets are top-down events geared toward the skilled enthusiast.
Location Needs	Requirement for a large, relatively flat area with good snow conditions and trails with a variety of terrain to meet the needs of beginners, intermediate and advanced skiers. Appropriate elevation for consistent snow conditions. Road access to at least one end of the trail system.
Issues	Tenure for use of public land or access/purchase of private land. Potential conflict with existing tenures and operators. Environmental and wildlife guidelines. Need to develop a trail complex more appropriate for racing.
Infrastructure	An organized, well designed and signed trail complex. Groomed trails. Warming hut facilities. Parking areas. Signage and maps. Fee collection and sales area. Ski patrol services. Grooming machines. Fuel, storage equipment and repair facilities. Event organization skills.
Financial	Moderate to high capital costs – a basic facility comprising trail building and minor service development would incur cash costs of at least $25,000 to $35,000 plus contributed equity in the form of volunteer labour. Land and warming hut costs would be in addition.

10.5 Cross-Country Skiing

Business Development	Families with children value good instruction for both the children and adults, activity areas specifically for younger participants, good ski rental facilities in terms of equipment quality and size selection and dining facilities catering to families. Couples will value not only the facilities and trails for the ski activity itself, but the overall ambience of the area, including dining and accommodation. A potential area would have to be thoroughly researched and planned to ensure there is the right product/market mix. The initial focus would be on identifying potential locations for trails, assessing the feasibility of each (what type of skiing?), and deciding what is needed to develop and maintain the trail system. For events, cooperation and participation of local outdoor clubs is essential. Affiliations with official race or event series (e.g. BC Cup Series) is essential. Cross Country BC sanctions races in the province among its affiliated local clubs. National and international sanctions are also possible. As with any Cross-country ski product, there must be a favourable Nordic ski area or centre and the required hospitality services. A minimum of 30 km events are standard. Organizing the loppet is very important and in order to be sanctioned must be innovative and enhance the visitor experience to increase participation and visitation. An assessment of the most successful loppets in other parts of the world could be undertaken. Local members may have to be educated on the different "styles" and "formats" of cross country ski competitions and encouraged to put them into their event hosting plans before a loppet is considered. Cross Country BC's Western Edge loppet program may be a model for development.
Key Success Factors	Cross-country ski areas are being transformed into multi-use, winter playgrounds or resort areas to appeal to broader markets. There is unlikely to be sufficient demand for solely cross-country unless other activities are factored into the development. While natural features such as varied terrain are important, the built environment is critical – that means things like night lighting, parking, clear signage, high-quality and well-maintained equipment, transportation services and the availability of multi-activity packages can really broaden the appeal. A Nordic centre will not catch on in a big way unless there is extensive grooming on the trail system, perhaps using snowmobiles to pull small groomers. If trails are groomed skiers can count on good conditions and so will be more willing to drive to the area for a day or weekend. Trails for skiers could be utilized in the summer and off-seasons for hikers, bicyclists, horseback riders for connecting various components of a site. But trails would have to allow the user to view and visit a variety of ecological and natural features.
Complementary Activities	Trails can be used for mountain biking and hiking in the summer / shoulder seasons. Provision of accommodation and services.

10.6 Road Tours

Product Description	***Highway Circle Tours.***
Markets	Primarily free independent regional and short-haul visitors from North American markets. This group tends to travel by private vehicle and will make a decision to participate in sightseeing and touring once in the region. Secondarily, bus/motorcoach tour participants from the US, Europe and Asia.
Competition	Many regions of the province and neighbouring Alberta have upgraded their hospitality infrastructure, services and attractions in recent years to pursue independent travellers. A major source of competition is Alaska, the Yukon and Northwest BC. Many visitors to the Peace region are travelling to and from Alaska and do not have a lot of discretionary holiday time. Catering more to this market means providing experiences not available further north. As an alternative route to Alaska, Northwest BC is also a competitive threat.
Overall Potential	The overall potential is good for the circle tour product, although the lack of growth in highway traffic counts suggests that communities will have to attract more of the existing visitor volumes if they are to increase activity.
Location Needs	Access to a variety of frontcountry attractions and interpreted experiences. High quality scenic viewing, wildlife viewing and sightseeing potential. Convenient access to parks and natural areas in the mid-country.
Issues	Highway safety. Road conditions. Cooperation among municipalities.
Infrastructure	Well-paved and maintained highway system. Secondary road system that provides access to staging areas for day activities. Pullouts and interpretive signage at regular intervals throughout the route. Visible, efficient visitor information centres. Well trained hospitality personnel. Visitor attractions.
Financial	Low capital costs (marketing) – Circle tours are primarily a marketing tool linking together a variety of existing features and attractions so as to encourage highway travellers to spend more time in the region. High capital costs (infrastructure) – Developing and maintaining a quality highway system with the necessary interpretive facilities and visitor attractions requires a significant investment in public and private infrastructure.
Business Development	In order to compete in the tourist market regionally and worldwide, communities in the region will need to find ways to coordinate their development and marketing efforts that emphasize the area's distinctive features in order to draw tourists. Internet websites are being used to provide information that allows individual tourists to plan their own itineraries and make bookings for accommodations in advance. Tourists should able to develop self-guided tours. There should also be supporting material and interpretive/sightseeing facilities along the touring route to support this self-guided activity. More conventional collateral material such as brochures and maps/guides in cooperation with communities and operators throughout the route will be required. Another possible tool are cassettes and CDs with narrative tours of the area.

10.6 Road Tours

Key Success Factors	Successful road touring regions have made commitments to preserving their areas while developing roads for improved access. Corridor Management Plans (CMP) are being used to establish clear guidelines for development and activities along a route. Thus, while infrastructure development is important for tourism, communities and operators will need to also be aware of the need to act in a way that conserves and protects the area for sustainable development. There is a need to encourage input from various parties and develop a cohesive strategy for tourism along the touring route. The ability to tap into senior government funding for highway development and improvement projects could determine how successful communities will be for developing their road tour markets. Developing highways in scenic areas with regular points of interest en route. Having clear signage throughout the route. Developing an adequate number of multi-lane roads to handle traffic volumes and maintain safe conditions. Variety of accommodation, particularly for families.
Complementary Activities	Any accessible day-use outdoor activity. Local attractions such as museums, interpretive centres and resorts. Accommodation packages.

10.7 Lodge/Resort

Product Description	***Lodge / Retreat / B&Bs.***
Markets	Soft adventure markets. Seniors for Elderhostels. Nature lovers of all ages. North American, Europeans, Japanese, other international. Destination market.
Competition	Backcountry accommodation is not well developed in BC and, except in the case of fishing lodges, not that well marketed. There are some high quality lodge/resorts in the Canadian Rockies and on the Coast, but there is also room for expansion.
Overall Potential	Lodge/resort accommodation supports the development of many other products assessed in this report which cater to the growing soft adventure market. In general, the hard adventure/enthusiast market will be satisfied with minimal infrastructure and the availability of camping facilities. Lodges and resorts lodges are generally preferred by the experienced ecotourist, with 66 percent stating them as their preferred choice of accommodation. In contract, the general touring traveller prefers to stay in hotels/motels (56 percent).
Location Needs	Access to different activities from accommodation location. Roads / fly in areas / hike in. Wilderness areas, parks, solitude, wildlife and wildlife viewing.
Issues	Crown lease if development is on public land. Applicable licences and permits. Capacity of trails, areas to accommodate activities. Conflicts on trails with other users.
Infrastructure	Trails or trail systems. Roads for access or fly-in capabilities. Availability of hospitality personnel. Certified guides. Access to municipal services or provision of same.
Financial	Moderate to high capital costs – a wide range of capital costs are possible, depending on the nature and size of the facility, but generally this product calls for significant land and building development. There are few statistics available for backcountry accommodation operations in BC outside of the sport fishing sector. Unaffiliated front-country accommodation facilities such as hotels and motels are rarely profitable without food and licensed beverage services, so backcountry cabins/lodges that are removed from convenient road access will be even more difficult to support.

10.7 Lodge/Resort

Business Development	Cabins/lodges require a significant investment in "human capital" for hospitality services (i.e. food and lodging), interpretation and guiding. Lodges are becoming multi-activity and multi-season resort destinations for both guided and self-guided activities. By being multi-activity and multi-season, lodges are in a better position to manage their cash flow and staff. It will be important to find complementary activities to leverage staff and equipment across seasons. Partnering with guiding operations to offer tours where expertise does not exist in-house. Theming is on the rise. 36 percent of leisure travellers surveyed said they were looking for a lodge, resort or hotel with a distinctive theme. Although outdoor adventure could be considered a theme in and of itself, the increasing number of lodges will dilute this as a differentiating factor. Therefore, specialization will become more important for a lodge to succeed.
Key Success Factors	A remote, uncrowded, scenic location that has controlled access is preferred for accommodation development. Adding amenities that add to the enjoyment of the overall experience would improve marketability but this will be limited by the availability of capital. Providing gear, guides and interpretive services linked to multi-activity experiences. Ease of access to and from staging areas. Where the facility is geared toward trail-based activities like hiking, biking and nature observation there must be reasonable trails and access. Accommodation facilities which conform to sustainability principles. A first priority is facilities with minimum environmental impact. Buildings that demonstrate the use of recycled materials are becoming more common. The use of low quantities of water and electricity is desirable. Where possible, internal electrical generation, from water, wind and sun should take place.
Complementary Activities	Any number of theme focused retreats (health, food, hobbies, business workshops). Tie in with other activities in the area. Locally focused booking / central registry agency.

10.8 **Huts**

Product Description	***Individual hut or hut system.***
Markets	The market for the hut will depend on the activity being targeted and the degree of "rusticness" of the accommodation. Huts can range from the very comfortable to the very primitive. Generally, the soft adventure traveller will value a hut for its comfort, the access that it provides to more remote outdoor area and other amenities such as meals. The hard adventure traveller is likely an active enthusiast in the particular activity being performed, and appreciates the proximity and shelter from the elements in the high alpine or wilderness areas, making more challenging routes possible. Single hut users will select the hut based on its location vis-à-vis a particular destination (i.e. a climbing peak) or an area (i.e. backcountry bowl for skiing) that suits the level of challenge they are seeking. They will also look for the hut to have a variety of excursions from the hut. Hut-to-hut users will select a hut system based on the variety of features within the area covered throughout the system. They will rarely spend more than one or two nights at a single hut.
Competition	Most of the existing huts and hut systems in Western Canada are targeted at backcountry skiers in the winter and hikers, backpackers and mountaineers in the summer. For both these activities the national park huts and others operated by the Alpine Club of Canada are major attractants. Many snowmobile and cross-country clubs maintain warming huts for local recreationists. Internationally, Colorado, Alaska and Europe have destination hut systems.
Overall Potential	There is good potential for a hut system in the region because of the overall lack of tourism infrastructure and the possibility of linking up with the highway system for entry and exit points.
Location Needs	Access to different activities from accommodation location. Access to high quality resources and features. Wilderness areas, parks, solitude, wildlife and wildlife viewing.
Issues	Crown lease or licence of occupation if development is on public land. Vandalism and unlicensed use. Hut maintenance and upkeep. Fee collection.
Infrastructure	Trails or trail systems. Signage. Reasonable road access to staging areas. Hospitality and transportation services near visitor centres and staging areas.
Financial	Moderate capital costs – rustic huts can be constructed for as little as $20,000 and range upward depending on size and comfort level. Huts are rarely developed for exclusive private sector use because of difficulties associated with fee collection and unapproved use. The revenue potential is rarely high enough to justify an on-site attendant or manager so the ability to control use is limited.

10.8 Huts

Business Development	Typically, huts on Crown land outside of parks have been erected by recreation clubs who have been licensed for such development by BCAL. There is no exclusivity of access to or within the huts in order to preserve the right of public access. Commercial use is considered unethical unless the operator reimburses for that use or otherwise contributes to maintenance and upkeep. There are few instances of hut development on Crown land by commercial operators because of problems associated with vandalism and unauthorized use by the public. As huts would be constructed on an existing trail, access would be available to all trail users. Even if a private operator constructed new trails for a hut or hut system, BCAL is likely to authorize such development through a Licence of Occupation, which would still allow public use of the trails and access to the hut (although the hut itself could be locked). This lack of exclusivity is likely to deter future commercial hut development. The funding of hut development is a major issue in BC, both for the initial capital investment and the ongoing operating costs. Most public or club huts have depended on donations and volunteers to build and operate. For privately-owned huts or refuges, such as those in France, many were previously farmhouses that were converted into huts, thereby reducing the initial capital cost. As well, these huts are in areas that already had well-developed and popular trail systems – in other words, demand preceded the fulfillment of the need. Huts can be developed to some extent through volunteer efforts and "sweat equity", but new facilities will have to demonstrate the ability to be somewhat self-sustaining. This will require careful demand assessment among targeted users. Where public huts are projected to operate on a deficit, the shortfall must be made up through other revenue sources, such as fundraising activities and membership dues. Any hut development must establish clear guidelines for acceptable use and activities and the extent to which they can be done in the area supported by the huts. They must follow practices that minimize the impact on the environment. A hut be developed either with minimal amenities that only need replenishment once in a while, or arrange for regular transport of supplies into the hut, either by motorized or non-motorized means. This will require careful planning to meet the expectations of users once they have been established while not compromising land health. Hut operators must establish a clear code of conduct and payment schedules. This information should be made available to users before they embark on their trip to the hut. In terms of enforcement, it may be necessary to employ hut wardens for the peak seasons, if not at all times the hut is open.
Key Success Factors	Clearly identifying purpose of the hut – is it for safety purposes, or for a comfortable stay in the mountains? Encouraging a sense of responsibility and peer pressure to keep the hut clean. Ensuring users understand the accommodation limits and space beforehand. Following sustainability principles Publishing exactly what is available at each hut how spots can be obtained as well as up-to-date information on availability. Making use of the Internet to accept and track bookings, which requires minimal staffing once system has been developed. Encouraging sharing of information amongst clubs, tour operators and other users.
Complementary Activities	Any remote or trail-based outdoor activity, especially hiking, backpacking, ski touring, snowmobiling and lakes/rivers tours. Locally focused booking / central registry agency.

11 Annex C — List of Acronyms

ABC	Aboriginal Business Canada
AGM	Annual General Meeting
AGOP	Angling Guide Operating Plan
ATBC	Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia
ABTTC	Aboriginal Tourism Team Canada
B&B	Bed and Breakfast
BCAL	British Columbia Assets and Land Corporation (now Land and Water British Columbia Inc.)
BCEAD	British Columbia Environmental Assessment Office
CFDC	Community Futures Development Corporation
CoC	Chamber of Commerce
CTC	Canadian Tourism Commission
EAO	British Columbia Environmental Assessment Office
ERDZ	Enhanced Resource Development Zone
FishRBC	Fisheries Renewal British Columbia
FIT	Fully Independent Traveler
FRBC	Forest Renewal British Columbia
HRDC	Human Resources Development Canada
IRDZ	Integrated Resource Development Zone
LAC	Local Advisory Committee for Tourism Opportunity Study
LRMP	Land Resource Management Plan
MCD	Ministry of Community Development
MELP	Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks
MoF	Ministry of Forests
MoFish	Ministry of Fisheries
MSBTC	Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture
PAS2	Goal 2 Protected Area Strategy
PUP	Park Use Permits
RCEP	Regional Community Enterprise Program
ROS	Resource Opportunity Spectrum
SRDZ	Special Resource Development Zone
SRM	Sustainable Resource Management
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats Analysis
TBC	Tourism British Columbia
TIA	Travel Industry Association of America
TOS	Tourism Opportunities Study
WTO	World Tourism Organization
WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Council

11.1 Glossary of Selected Gitx̱san Terms

GITX̱SAN TERM	DESCRIPTION
Wilp	❖ House group – basic social, political and economic unit in Gitx̱san traditional system
Pdeek	❖ Clan – there are four clans in the Gitx̱san system:
Lax Gibuu	❖ wolf clan
Lax Seel	❖ frog clan
Lax Skiik	❖ eagle clan
Gisgaast	❖ fireweed clan
Wil'naat'ahl	❖ all members of a Pdeek
Sim'oogit	❖ hereditary chief
Xsan	❖ river of the mist – Skeena River
Gitx̱san	❖ people of the river of the mist
Lax̱ yip	❖ territory
Adaawk	❖ oral history
Ay̱ooḵw	❖ law
Dax̱gyet	❖ authority of chief to handle everything on territory
Liligit	❖ feast (potlach)

12 Annex D Bibliography

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